

BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

MECHANICS OF
THE SALES LET-
TER: HOW TO
MAKE UP LISTS
AND CONDUCT
TESTS: PUTTING
SALES SCHEMES
INTO LETTERS
FOLLOWING
UP ORDERS
HANDLING LOCAL
TRADE BY LETTER

BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

VOLUME II

HOW TO GET AND HOLD BUSINESS BY LETTER: *24 chapters containing 234 tried out plans and 97 actual letters that show how to plan, write and handle a follow-up; how to compile lists, key returns and test pulling power; how to sell goods by mail out of the store; and methods for gaining attention, fixing concentration, offering special inducements, trying last resorts, forcing replies and awakening dead prospects—clever schemes that make letters pull results*



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What The FOLLOW-UP Can Do For You

NO OTHER PHASE of correspondence or of letter writing is so little understood as the follow-up. There is nothing mysterious or difficult about it—at the same time it is one of the **MOST POWERFUL** engines in the business world—not only is it powerful, but it will **PULL ANY KIND** of a **LOAD**; it will work for any line of business. It will do educational work, get information, locate prospects, sell goods, collect money and tighten the hold on distant customers. This chapter shows what makes the follow-up possible, how it can be used and what it will do

WHEREVER there is a dollar to be spent, or needful information to be gathered, or a public to be educated, there is a place for the follow-up," says a mail-order man who has found in the postage stamp a modern Aladdin's lamp that lets loose the genii of unlimited powers.

"Follow-up" is the most elastic word in the advertising vocabulary. Its use is confined to no one business or class of business. It is universal. Wherever men seek to dispose of wares; wherever sales are to be made, information secured, money collected, distant customers gingered up—there the follow-up can be utilized.

There is a little hotel up in the Berkshires. The charm of the spot, its seclusion, or something, seems to make it a lodestone for bridal couples. Records are taken from the register as to this class of guests, and eleven months from the date of a couple's first visit a little reminder of the hotel's existence is sent in the

shape of a suggestion that the wedding anniversary be spent where the honeymoon had waxed and waned. This letter proves its right to the title of "follow-up."

A cement manufacturer had a press-clipping bureau keep him informed of all failures in municipal concrete work within his freight range. When a failure was reported, the contractor received a letter which, while sympathizing with him, set forth the advantages of this particular brand of cement in a way that implied that the accident would never have happened if Sampson cement had been used. Municipal boards and other officers interested in the work also received diplomatic communications designed to make them sorry that they had not before known of this *good* cement. The quality of the cement backed up the statements made about it and this simple but unusual follow-up scheme alone, without an agate line of general advertising, raised the concern from twenty-fourth to fifteenth place in the sales-list of cement manufacturers within ten years.

When a man asks what can be done with the follow-up, one word fully answers the question: "anything."

A short-time money-lender finds that a follow-up sent to salaried men brings him all the business he can handle.

An agent for a laundry in a district where there is the closest competition for business, uses the follow-up to secure new customers, particularly for flat-work from boarding-house keepers.

Follow-up letters pay an enterprising rag- and junk-man, who announces the date of his next call and the prices he will pay.

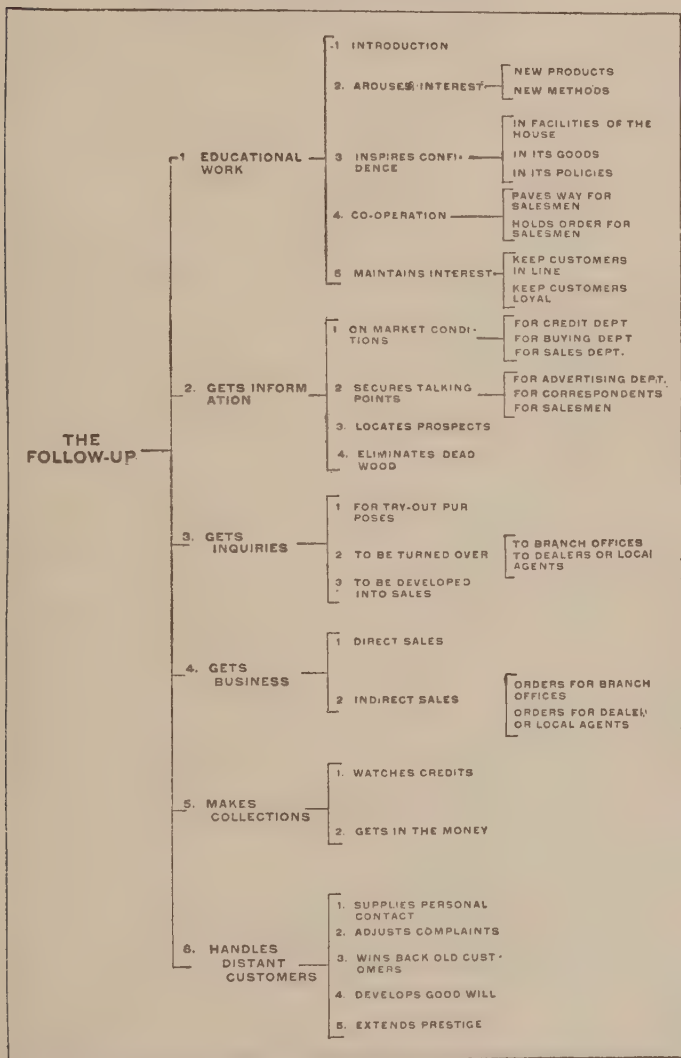
A club for business men extends its membership and influence by follow-up combined with a personal canvass.

A hospital using a definite method of treatment, found the follow-up profitably took the place of personal solicitation.

An amusement outfitter found it added appreciably to the number of sales made on thirty-days' trial to conduct a whirlwind follow-up campaign to help patronage for the amusement device being tried out.

The storage section of a metropolitan department-store found a follow-up sent to purchasers of valuable furs and cloth garments brought more business than all other business-getting plans combined.

The uses of the follow-up are infinite; it is applicable for all lines and nearly every activity of modern business can be stimulated by the recurrent appeal to the prospect.



The functions of the follow-up are almost unlimited and nearly every department of business can apply it profitably as shown by this chart

Generally speaking, there are six purposes for which the follow-up is commonly used: it may be educational in its work; it may be used to get information, to get inquiries or orders, to collect money and to tighten the hold on the distant customer.

There is no other educational medium that is more practical for most propositions than the follow-up, yet comparatively few businesses appreciate its possibilities. It is in acting as a preliminary to the salesman that the educative follow-up finds its greatest field. Salesmen for pianos, sewing-machines, insurance—men who ordinarily have to spend fully four-fifths of their time on wasted attempts to see the prospective customer—are able to cover twice the territory when a preparatory follow-up campaign precedes the canvass. Not only is a salesman able to see a larger percentage of prospects, but he can center his efforts on the fine points of the proposition and “closing-up.”

A sewing-machine company, extending sales largely by means of local agents, found it was most advantageous to flood a territory with educational follow-ups before an agent was sent out. Then a local agent was appointed, and supplied not only with advertising matter but with two or three skilled solicitors to go out in the field and get business started. This is the last letter prior to the appointment of an agent:

Dear Sir:

By this time you are familiar with sewing machine economy and construction.

Does it not strike you that the thing to do is to get as good value in machine construction when you buy, as possible?

You want wear--ease in running--no repair bills--the best service possible.

Under our guarantee plan of selling, you get this--OR YOUR MONEY REFUNDED.

Fifteen days from today we will send you a valuable coupon to apply on purchase price, provided you purchase from the agent whose name is on the value certificate.

Very truly yours,

BROWN SEWING MACHINE CO.

By *M. B. Andrews.*

The educational work begins by introducing a new firm and an rousing interest in its products and methods; it should inspire confidence in the facilities of the firm, in its goods and in its integrity and pave the way for the salesman. Finally it should maintain the customer's interest, keep him "lined up" and transmit enthusiasm through the mails that will key up the loyalty of the distant salesmen and dealers and customers.

With every sale that is made there is a risk of losing the customer; something may go wrong with the shipment; the goods may not come up to the standard that he had set in his mind. In any of these events the follow-up can be called upon to maintain interest and educate the customer to continued liking.

The right kind of follow-up, the kind that convinces, and anchors the customer firmer than ever to the house, is one of the most profitable letters possible. For the cost of getting the customer is frequently greater than the profit on the first sale. It is the re-order that most firms want; it is regular customers who pay dividends, and the follow-up is the most potent agency in keeping them interested.

It is just as necessary to galvanize the distant dealer as it is the distant consumer, and many jobbers now use follow-up letters to dealers covering such practical subjects as talking-points for the line; how, when and what assortments to buy; how to put goods on display, including special window- and floor-displays; prices to ask; how to advertise the line; conducting special sales; selling for cash; getting in the money; distribution of circulars; keeping track of profits.

Other houses use inspirational follow-ups to supplement the dry facts of the informational letter. Both are good.

The inspirational follow-up is one which is peculiarly fitting for the purpose of keeping the man in the field enthused and going. The salesman, temperamentally as well as from the nature of his work, is liable to lose several days a month from discouragement. This takes a considerable toll from results, if it is not counteracted by the sales manager or home-office. Where the bulletin is too impersonal, the follow-up fits in, thanks to its intimacy, authority and personality.

More and more it is becoming customary for a business to go direct to the source for needed information. As an instance, a Milwaukee firm manufacturing electrical devices, bases its

advertising campaign largely on information drawn from the sales-agencies in different parts of the country, the salesmen in the field and actual users of the company's product.

But this information does not come in on the first call, and it is necessary to follow up the original inquiry and put the request in various forms, and the advantage of answering, in various lights, before all the desired data is obtained.

A business-device company sends out monthly, to its men on the road, follow-up letters of this kind:

Dear Mr. Phillips:

Please write me concisely what argument you have found most convincing when the prospect alleges the price of our #7 is too high for the amount of business done by him.

Merely an outline of the arguments you are using will be considerably received.

Yours for business,

J. H. LAWSON,

Sales Manager.

While the advertising and sales-departments are special beneficiaries of the follow-up designed to get information, yet the credit department, collection department and buying departments make use of these facts, especially such as relate to market conditions, operations of competitors, development of new territories, and so forth. In fact, any department of the business can reach out for information—and get it—by means of the ever-ready and adaptable follow-up.

Another function of the follow-up is to get inquiries. Many concerns leave this entirely to the advertisement, but there are firms that have built up large businesses without using a display advertisement, or traveling a single salesman. Ask the general manager of a wallpaper-book house what it costs him to reach the trade and he'll answer without hesitating, "Two cents a call." And the "two-cent-a-call" salesmen that he travels are bringing in the business at the rate of a million dollars every year in more cases than one. The man who calls on a decorator as representing one of these book-houses would have made a flying start toward being put down as an impostor, for since the inception of the business every sale, every complaint

every order, every collection has been handled by Uncle Sam. Prospects are found, dead wood eliminated from the list and the sales are made through the follow-up.

Circularization to get inquiries may be utilized most profitably by all concerns for, at least, one purpose, the "try-out" of a new proposition. When it is wanted to put on a "gum-shoe" campaign with little expense, the letter-method is the way to get inquiries. An advertisement would immediately attract all those interested in the same line and the business-getting plan might be disclosed to competitors before it is under way.

But by circularizing a list and following up the first letter with others, it is possible to secure a fairly accurate estimate of the number who will be interested in the proposition and to modify it or even discontinue it, if necessary before it is advertised.

A second use of the inquiry-seeking follow-up is to get leads that may be turned over to a branch-office or to the dealer or local agent. Many inquiries reach the home-office that can best be handled by a dealer or local representative, and turning over interested prospects is not only the surest way of closing a sale, but it does more than anything else to enthuse a distant dealer or agent and redouble his efforts for new business.

Order-getting is the big function of the follow-up. It may be indirect, by bringing prospect and dealer together, or it may be the direct sale of goods—the method that removes the limitations to one trade zone and brings in orders half way round the world from the skirmish line of civilization. The yearly earnings-report of half a hundred mail-order houses selling every conceivable line of merchandise and the great specialty houses and publishing concerns that carry on their work entirely by mail give eloquent testimony of the power of the follow-up to get business direct.

The corner druggist who writes a letter to his lady customers telling them about a new cold cream he is handling and the great mail-order house with its 36,000-man organization and issuing eighty voluminous catalogues every year—retailers, wholesalers, manufacturers, jobbers and mail-order houses they can all use the follow-up to advantage. Because of the importance of this function of the follow-up it is treated at length elsewhere in its various phases and angles.

The follow-up is likewise the mainstay of the credit department, systematically bringing in the money from the distant

dealers, agents and customers on whom it would be entirely impractical to have personal collectors call. How the follow-up is used in making collections is shown in Volume III.

A final function of the follow-up is customer-handling—establishing a point of contact across the states, adjusting complaints, winning back lost customers, securing their good will, creating a feeling of personal interest that means continued trade—more business—larger earnings.

Despite the phenomenal successes that have been registered and the apparent simplicity of the follow-up, it is nothing less than appalling to see how it is misused in the hands of incompetent correspondents. You might as well say that any man you send out can sell goods, as to expect a follow-up—just because it is a follow-up—to accomplish its purpose. Just as the salesman must have a definite aim, tried and proved argument, and a well-defined plan of approach, so must the follow-up be shaped with “an idea behind.”

The sales manager would discharge a salesman on the spot who tried to sell goods with aimless, disconnected arguments, yet he will waste his money on a follow-up that would be a signal for a blue pay-envelope if the same words came from the the mouth of a salesman. Follow-up must have a basis. Before the first letter is written the plan or proposition must be determined on—not in a haphazard way, but by careful analysis, and every letter that leaves the mailing-room should be a logical continuance of the scheme or proposition it is based on. A man won't buy an automobile because it is speedy and handsome. Those are vital points, but the questions of durability, economy of up-keep, equipment, and so forth, all enter into the proposition, and these gaps must be filled to make the sale. True, all these arguments may not be necessary for one prospect, but they will be for another, and he is the man that the last follow-up letter is going to sell. Unless every argument is hooked together—every space filled, and the proposition or scheme behind the whole thing is kept well in the foreground, the campaign is destined to fail.

And another factor that enters into the success of the follow-up is the list to which the proposition is sent. Names must be “live” and judiciously selected. The campaign that will score heavily on one class of prospects will fall down on a second. The dead ones must be eliminated so that the postage-stamp

salesman will not waste time on names that do not represent either active or potential prospects.

When every name on the list is a *live* one, when every letter is right—then the returns that pour in make the factory-manager figure on his desk-blotter about putting in a night-force.

In following up inquiries, it should be remembered that they may be too cheap—of course *sales* can never be made too cheaply (providing Mr. Credits is at his desk) but inquiries that cost *too little* are frequently undesirable. The tone of a letter, an ill-advised offer, wrong lists—any of these things may be productive of inquiries that will triple and quadruple in selling-cost against inquiries that come higher in the first place. It is desirable to eliminate the curiosity-seeking appeal in the letter itself in order to guard against “*too cheap*” inquiries. Then, on the other hand, there is the inquiry that costs too much—is so high in price that the possibility of a profitable sale is precluded.

There is a large publishing-house in New York that has long featured a set of books selling for \$25. It can put an advertisement in some of the so-called “cheaper” mail-order journals and bring in a flood of replies that cost less than five cents each—but they are too expensive to sell; very few who write in can be sold a \$25 set of books. Then, on the other hand, it can advertise in certain ultra-conservative publications where the replies will cost \$3 to \$4. Here again the replies are too expensive, as the selling margin will not justify such a price for the name of a prospect.

If the follow-up does not pull there is some basic trouble: the list may be worthless, the letters may not be properly written, or the idea back of them may be wrong—or a definite idea may be entirely lacking. You must learn to diagnose the trouble before you can remedy it. Test out the lists, try out the letters, prove the proposition by the results on the try-out, and you can evolve a strong, productive campaign. It means continual experiments and a willingness to retrace steps at the first sign of the wrong road, and the ability to direct the line of procedure—it is these things that have marked the history of every successful mail-order campaign.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF Follow-Up And How To *Use* Them

TO MAKE the most out of follow-ups, they must be thoroughly understood—the different kinds and where they should be used. The continuous follow-up; the campaign follow-up and the wear-out follow-up, each has its special features, EACH IS ADAPTED FOR A DEFINITE PURPOSE in business building and each has its limitations. The correspondent should understand the possibilities of each kind, when to begin using it, how to handle it—and when to stop. This chapter points out the difference in the three classes, shows their adaptability and how they are successfully used in different lines of business

A MILWAUKEE grocer, having a steady trade remaining at about the same level, became interested in the land business. As vice-president of a company owning a limited acreage of fruit land, he soon learned the possibilities of the follow-up. The campaign, put on by a high-grade promoter, was most successful; fully twice as much land as that on which the company had an option could have been sold.

Immediately upon the close of this campaign the grocer decided to sell the goods in his store by the same method—to put on a whirlwind campaign for trade along the line that had proved such a success for the real-estate proposition.

Result: the enterprising grocer was out the expense of his work, stationery and stamps—he even lost business in this trade-getting attempt.

The reason? He made the common mistake of using one kind of follow-up where another kind only would do the work. His real-estate proposition was successful with a "campaign" follow-up, where short time in which to purchase and large returns on investment were both essential elements. The grocery business, on the contrary, having neither of these elements in its make-up, called for a "continuous" follow-up—one which pushes constantly and conservatively for trade.

Fitting the follow-up to the proposition determines the measure of success. Both the professional follow-up writer, handling hundreds of widely-varying letters for different lines, and the man who writes merely an occasional series for himself should understand the different kinds of follow-up and know where and how each kind should be used.

In this age of scientific salesmanship and business psychology and other imposing "sciences" that our fathers would not recognize by their new names, the unassuming little follow-up seems to be a deep mystery, not only to the average man, but to business men who ought to know it outside in and back again. Even some advertising men have to screen their ignorance with a veil of arrogance when asked about the follow-up, by saying that mere letter-writing is out of their line. And yet "mere letter-writing" has saved the day in many an almost lost business battle. "Lack of knowledge of the simple A B C of the follow-up," declares one man with wide experience, "lies behind nine advertising failures out of ten." Many men connect the follow-up in their mind's eye with enormous filing systems and complicated methods of tangling a prospect up in such a mass of red tape, that he is forced to hold still while his money is gently separated from him. Yet the most complicated thing about the whole follow-up system is its name.

Putting the definition dictionary-style, a follow-up is one of two things:

A letter, usually designed to sell goods, and one of a series forwarded at intervals.

Or, the series itself, comprehending all of the group of letters, or other advertising matter.

Follow-ups may be divided into three groups or classes:

1. *Continuous*: That class of follow-up letters sent out by a firm to keep itself constantly in touch with its customers and prospects, announcing prices, reasonable offerings.

installation of new lines, season's greetings, with the idea of bringing to the notice of the prospect or customer certain facts regarding the firm and its goods or service.

2. *Campaign*: That series of follow-up letters designed as a whole to interest the prospect and close the sale; each letter following its predecessor logically, piling up arguments of interest, and leading to the climax. In the campaign follow-up, time is commonly an essential element, as the offer may lapse or all the commodity offered may be sold or the expense may make the business unprofitable.

3. *Wear-out*: That class of follow-up letters, each designed to make the sale, repeating the offer, placing it in different lights and forms of appeal, continuing as long as the returns from each letter are sufficient to make it profitable, until the list is exhausted.

The continuous follow-up is the salt and sugar of the business-getting world. It is as staple as calico in a country store. Any institution which conducts a legitimate, permanent business can employ the continuous follow-up. The firm whose trade is staple can extend that trade by staple means.

A druggist, crowded out of his corner location, was obliged to take a store two doors north of the corner on a side street. His campaigning-by-mail experience began with a simple announcement of his change of location. From time to time there came to him reasons why it was to the advantage of his customers to patronize him. These reasons he put in the form of follow-up letters. Through the trade-getting qualities of these "continuous" forms this druggist has practically tripled his trade.

The series featured these points:

Letter 1: Change of location because of rise in rental.

Letter 2: Stick by your druggist, for to him is entrusted that which is most precious to you—your health.

Letter 3: I am going to make it to your advantage to come "the extra two doors." (Accompanied by coupons good for one week—one cent on ten-cent purchases; two cents on twenty-five-cent purchases, and so forth).

Letter 4: What's the reason that my trade is staying by me? (Prizes for best answers).

Letter 5: The reasons why my trade stays by me—what my patrons say.

Letter 6: Continuation of No. 5.

Letter 7: The pure drug question; why we must handle only pure, fresh drugs.

Letter 8: How we can fill *any* prescription.

Letter 9: Why our expenses are small—and how you profit.

Letter 10: We like to have you drop in “for that minute”—and why.

These letters continue indefinitely as long as the seller has some new point to make, some fresh goods to sell.

What is possible for a druggist on a side street is possible for any man handling a standard line. Groceries, dry goods, clothing, boots and shoes, hardware, plumbing, banks—all these and similar lines can use the continuous follow-up as a legitimate part of advertising expense.

As an example of one of a series of continuous follow-ups which brought business in the retail line, is a letter put out by a hardware dealer in a town of twenty-five thousand. From six to eight hundred were mailed every six weeks for over two years. It was accompanied by an illustrated list of timely goods:

Dear Mr. Smith:

When you think of hardware, we venture to say that you think of BURTON'S.

For the firm of BURTON'S has been associated with hardware needs and hardware satisfaction in Wellington county for a period of thirty-four years.

Pretty considerable length of time for a business to run--and GROW, don't you think? When YOUR excellent business has reached that age you'll feel like celebrating in some way. OUR way is to concentrate upon twenty-five or thirty items that you are sure to need, and, without shading the quality because of the lower price, assure you that you can keep one dollar out of every five IN YOUR POCKET when you buy from this list.

Read and consider the attached bargain list and remember if it's hardware it's at BURTON'S.

Very sincerely yours,

BURTON'S.

By *Wallace E. Lee*

Manager.

Another business that lends itself to the use of the continuous follow-up is banking. The banker cannot offer any special inducements—like the merchant—either in price-reduction or "more goods for the same money." His plan by which to get business must be even, continuous, keeping the name of his bank before the desirable prospects and emphasizing its conveniences, solidity and facilities.

A western banker in a town of twenty-five thousand used a "cashier's letter" as a continuous follow-up. It was sent to a list of six hundred select names and was instrumental in opening over three hundred accounts:

Dear Sir:

I wish that I could bring home to every man, woman and child in Fillmore county the benefits which come from a savings account in a bank which is known to be conservative and accommodating.

First of all, every dollar that you put in a bank helps the community in which you live by circulating--being spent--in that community.

For it is just the same with money as it is with favors. Favors are of value only as they are done for you or you do them for some one else. Favors undone do no one good. Similarly, money that is kept out of circulation is of no use to a community. The minute it gets into circulation it helps you. Your business, your neighbors and your friends; all get the benefit from the dollar which you save and put in the bank.

Hoarded money is idle money. Idle money is just as much to be abhorred as an idle person. Put it in the bank and the bank puts it in circulation--lends it to people who need it--and uses it as a basis for favors against which you can draw.

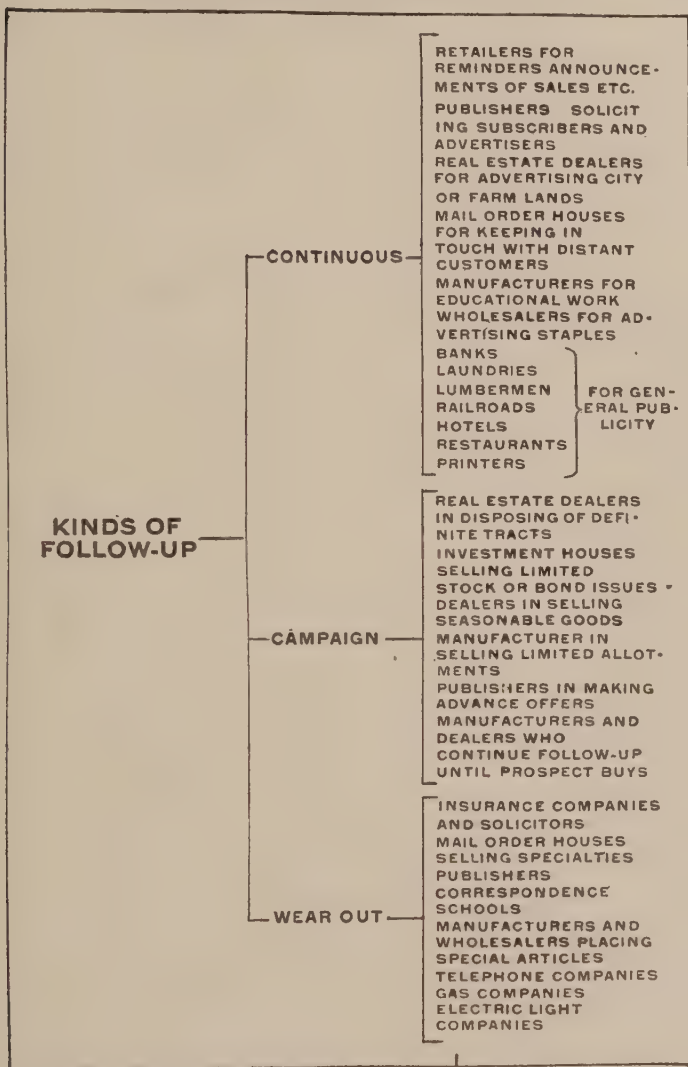
This is one of the benefits of a bank account--come into this bank and talk over some of the other benefits. You will be surprised to find out how many ways there are of benefiting yourself by having money in the bank.

Very truly yours,



Cashier.

The manufacturer, jobber and dealer all need to keep items and prices continuously before the customer. To do this calls



A chart showing the kinds of follow-up adapted to different businesses

for neither the exercise of persuasion or campaign methods. A simple form of announcement sent at intervals—for it must be brought to the customer's notice with regularity—does the work. This is the simplest form of the continuous follow-up and one of the classes that is both economical in cost and sure of results. It may be nothing more than an invitation to call and inspect a new line of goods or it may quote prices and describe certain products in detail.

"Often it is possible for a business to use both continuous and campaign follow-ups," says the manufacturer of pianos. "The continuous follow-up, in our business particularly, corresponds to publicity advertising; the campaign follow-up to direct advertising. A certain percentage of our receipts goes for the purpose of burning the name of our piano into the minds of the people; a still larger percentage is spent in business-getting campaigns such as 'piano-contests,' and so forth.

"In bringing the name of our piano before the people, we use thousands of continuous follow-ups. These constitute a part of the publicity side of our marketing. While a certain percentage of sales must necessarily result from this class of letters, the campaign follow-up is looked to for results that can be keyed and traced."

As the designation "campaign" implies, each letter in this class of follow-up does not stand alone, but is a unit in a definite business-getting campaign; it is a part operating in conjunction with more or less complicated, interrelated parts.

A business-getting campaign employs advertisements, booklets, circulars, follow-up letters, all to one end: to accomplish a more or less definite purpose within a certain length of time. This time may be indefinite, as when based upon the closing out of a line, which, when sold, cannot be renewed. Or, it may be based upon the number of returns, ceasing automatically when the cost of the campaign can not be paid out of the profits from orders.

Again, the campaign may cease because of the lapse of interest, as when a leading statesman bought a large tract of land in one of the newer states, the land campaign based upon this fact was limited by the time in which interest could be maintained in the "leading statesman" talking point.

Similarly, when a noted actress was interpreting a character which caught the public fancy, an enterprising manufacturer

of pleasure boats based a series of campaign follow-ups on the fact that a boat selected by her bore the name of the character she was then so successfully interpreting.

The campaign may be limited by some premium offer as when a company selling irrigated lands in Washington spurred up its sales by offering a certain number of apple trees free to the first hundred buyers. This inducement was the basis of a special campaign.

Then there may be a campaign follow-up that ends when the prospect buys or for some other reason is out of the market. Where some big improvement is contemplated such as the construction of a large power plant or the equipping of a mine or the installation of an irrigating system manufacturers reinforce the work of salesmen with a letter follow-up that continues until the prospect makes his contracts.

The campaign follow-up turns the intangible opportunity into tangible returns. An event takes place—the shrewd manager recognizes it as a happening upon which to base a follow-up campaign. A special item in a manufacturer's line proves a success far beyond expectations—here is an opportunity for a campaign follow-up. Public interest is roused to a high pitch by a new invention—a chance for the campaign follow-up.

Campaign follow-ups originate in most cases from timeliness—from opportunity, but so great is the business-getting power of a good sales letter that a series of campaign letters may be put on to advantage at any seasonable time.

The wear-out follow-up is the personification of level persistence. It is adapted to the sale of articles that are the same in style and in price year after year. The best examples of wear-out follow-ups are in the sale of standard books, musical instruments, typewriters and equipment on which the price does not fluctuate.

The principles governing the use of the wear-out follow-ups are based on the experience of those office salesmen who "comb the list" relentlessly, so extracting the last possible dollar from it.

The wear-out may be used not only in disposing of standard products but it may be introduced as the finishing series of a campaign to dispose of the surplus stock. Its success depends upon new angles of presentation, new approaches to the prospect's interest, easier terms of payment or some appeal that will take hold.

It is necessary to watch the record-sheet closely in order to stop just as soon as the returns fail to show a profit. Each mailing must show a profit for the aim is not for general publicity as in the continuous follow-up, or to work the reader up to a climax as in the campaign follow-up. As the name suggests, the plan is to keep hammering away at a list of prospects until it is worn out—not worth the cost of another mailing.

Another thing to be kept in mind is to guard against demoralizing the regular trade, undoing the work of previous campaigns or making future campaigns difficult or impossible.

The only guide to whether a wear-out series will pay is the record of returns of past wear-outs, where these are available. Where these are not, it is possible to determine whether or not a wear-out series will pay by going back over the records of the campaign follow-up and noting whether the percentage of returns has been abnormally high or low. In either case, a wear-out is advisable. High returns show that right methods are being used and that there is more money where considerable has already been secured. Where the returns are low, the more expensive campaign can be abandoned and the less expensive wear-out substituted. This may eventually show where the campaign was faulty or determine what lines to follow in future business.

“A successful wear-out letter showed us along what lines to push for future business,” says the manager of a firm selling cement-mixers. “For several years we have put on one or two campaigns a year in order to clean up stock on hand. Out of machines sold by the campaign, one or two items would come back. We rely on our wear-out letters to sell these. But, as a by-product, one of our wear-out letters produced such results that not only our campaign letters but our advertising matter has been made to conform to the particular plan of selling used by that particular letter.”

It is to be remembered that unlike the continuous, the wear-out cannot rightfully be charged in part as publicity advertising expense. The former always creates a head of advertising value; the latter may not. The enterprising dealer who puts out a line of convincing continuous follow-ups is pretty sure to get advertising as well as direct returns. But the business which puts on a wear-out series may get only a small advertising value from them.

The warning to guard against demoralizing trade through the use of the wear-out series, calls for close observance. The skilled follow-up writer will always leave the list so that he can come back to it again and again on either similar or different propositions, after a reasonable lapse of time. One class of wear-outs acts as the special sale is said to act, by breeding a class of sale-followers who wait until "bargain day" and can neither be coaxed nor driven until they feel satisfied that the last inducement has been made. Occasionally, too, some one may deliberately demoralize trade conditions by means of a series of wear-outs which, when they fail to pull, are used to kill competition for similar propositions.

No matter what kind of a follow-up is used, every letter should leave the way open for a come-back. Some time the seemingly dead prospect may be active and it is the part of foresight to leave him in such a frame of mind that negotiations can be opened up again at any time.

There is nothing mysterious about the different kinds of follow-up, but the correspondent who hopes for big returns should understand clearly the nature of the three kinds and know which one is best adapted to his particular proposition.

How To Handle ARGUMENTS In The Follow-up

PART VII

HOW TO CONDUCT A FOLLOW-UP

CHAPTER 27

IT IS NECESSARY to approach prospects from different angles, resort to different attention-getting schemes, and present attractive inducements, but, after all, it is the ARGUMENTS you use that land the orders—the logic—the reasons why. The great weakness of so many follow-up campaigns is ANTI-CLIMAX—the first letter is reasonably strong, but the succeeding letters, instead of increasing in strength, become weaker—the arguments are not handled effectively. This chapter takes up the use of talking points in a series of letters, shows how they should work up a prospect's interest to a climax and finally get his order.

IN your mail this morning there was probably some proposition that interested you more or less. Possibly you had answered an advertisement, and this letter gave you the information you were seeking; possibly you were on the point of ordering when the telephone rang, or the next letter caught your attention, or some one came into the room—and the letter was laid to one side for consideration at some future time.

Tomorrow morning other letters will be presenting their messages, and the day after more letters will make a bid for your attention. Gradually this proposition will be crowded out of your mind until you receive a second letter a week or ten days later, but instead of reviving your interest, the letter will likely rehash some of the points that were

made in the first letter and remind you that you have not ordered—something that you know as well as the writer—and each following letter will be weaker and weaker—the arguments will be more and more diluted.

Finally you will buy of another concern that presents its proposition logically, with talking points that increase in convincing power until you are persuaded and write your name at the bottom of the order blank.

Just as a lack of the proper arrangement of the parts of a letter will weaken a message, so the lack of effective arrangement in the different letters will take the life out of a proposition.

So in considering arrangement in the follow-up, there are two general principles to be considered: placing the points in the series, and placing the points in the individual letter.

There are some products that can be marketed by a campaign that is worked out entirely in advance. On staple goods where price or quality make up the principal talking points, the series of letters may be prepared beforehand. But with the majority of propositions, the follow-up should be a matter of growth; it should be developed from week to week. Arguments may be tentatively arranged but experiments should be made to test out their pulling power and to determine the most effective arrangements. Only the beginner tries to put on a big campaign with a complete set of "hand-me-down" form letters.

One successful correspondent has become convinced that in his follow-up, embracing six letters, he must have one main theme for each letter, and at least twelve good talking points subordinate to, but in general line with, the central thought.

This arrangement is very different from his original series. His whole follow-up has been a growth; it has been changed and rewritten time and again until it represents the strongest possible arrangement

His series now is made up in this way:

General theme: "Our product enables you to make more money with less work."

Letter No. 1: Our product actually saves you money.

Letter No. 2: Our product has saved other firms a great deal of money.

Letter No. 3: To get the results mentioned in one and two the investment you will be required to make is not too large.

Letter No. 4: Specific plans by which payment for the device may be made out of what it saves.

Letter No. 5: Summary of preceding talking points, with the addition of new point: durability of product.

Letter No. 6: Summary of preceding letters, emphasizing the fact that there will be no reduction in price; a new argument presenting figures to show that during the time which has elapsed since the first letter the device might have been paid for out of savings.

The twelve subordinate arguments deal with comparative simplicity of product, wide range of work done by it, ease of operation, age and reliability of organization and a number of points hammering home both directly and by oblique presentation the fact that the product is the best on the market.

That the arrangement has much to do with the success of this series is shown by the fact that changes in this arrangement have invariably lowered the pulling power.

A manufacturer of gasoline engines knew the manufacture and sale of his product from his apprenticeship days. He was a forceful field salesman but his letter campaigns did not sell. Believing that there was a sale for his product by mail, he dictated, exactly as though he were talking to a prospect in the field, all the points he could think up. Then, getting together a bunch of local prospects who were in the market, he asked them to pick out the arguments which appealed to them as most convincing.

Sixteen of the number placed three talking points at the head—these were made the lead arguments of the series. Other points ranking secondary in the contest were used either in later follow-ups or as secondary arguments in other letters.

The manager was shrewd enough to guard against the fatal "tapering off" at the end of a campaign, so he took his best closing points, which had stood him in good stead in the field, and used them for the final paragraphs in the letters and the final arguments in the series.

To get the outside viewpoint, he went once more to the same group of prospects and asked them why they were actually going to buy his engine. Any reasons which were not the same as those on his list—for the most part they coincided—were used in the "middle" letters of the series.

This was the final arrangement of the series:

General theme: "Absolute dependability of engine. It always runs."

Letter No. 1: What we claim and prove that the Sun engine will do for you.

Letter No. 2: Why the Sun engine always runs.

Letter No. 3: How unskilled workmen have succeeded in running the Sun engine to their satisfaction. (Accompanied by facsimile testimonials.)

Letter No. 4: Offer to submit plans for using the engine in the prospect's business so as to save its cost. (Accompanied by plans showing how engine is now actually in use.)

Letter No. 5: Ways in which the Sun engine is used—how *you* can use it.

Letter No. 6: Isn't it time for a trial? (Accompanied by a special trial blank emphasizing the refund privilege.)

Letter No. 7: Summary of preceding points (a five-page letter with special emphasis on guarantee and refund.)

Letter No. 8: "No chance to lose," summary showing how the buyer takes no risk. Special stress is placed on ease of operation and money saved while the engine is in use, and emphasis is placed on the offer to refund money if, for any reason, the engine is not satisfactory.

This arrangement was the result of consultation with prospective buyers and actual selling experience in the field. It is apparently a strong arrangement as variations have failed to pull as satisfactorily. These two illustrations show how important a logical arrangement is; haphazard methods will not make the big scores.

And when it comes to distributing the arguments in the different letters, guard against an anti-climax. Remember the clever salesman who called on you yesterday, how he held in reserve some clincher that he sprung when he saw you were almost persuaded and how that strong reserve argument put your name on the dotted line. A southern land company got a line on its strongest talking points by requiring every salesman who closed a deal to fill out a line on his report blank:

"The argument that sold this land _____"

On this space the salesmen were instructed to enter the one particular point which, in their opinion, had sold the land. Only sales reports (not call reports) asked for this information as it was reasoned that only the talking points that actually

brought deals to a head were wanted. These blanks proved a mine of information, not only giving the office new angles on the business but enabling correspondents to classify arguments in order of strength and this resulted in rewriting or rearranging the entire series of follow-up literature. The sales made by letter, immediately increased, proving once more the necessity for arranging talking points according to their pulling power.

The great weakness with most follow-up campaigns is that the correspondent exhausts his big talking points in the first letter and then has to warm them up or write about non-essentials in subsequent letters. It may be necessary to cram the first letter full of selling talk if your product is some low-priced article, for then the margin of profit will not justify a campaign and unless the article is sold in the first letter the prospect is passed up.

But the correspondent who has been selling a fountain pen for one dollar must not try to use the same methods when he goes with an automobile concern putting out machines at \$1,000 or \$1,500. One man who made such a jump crammed all his big arguments into the first letter, overlooking the fact that the sale of an automobile is a matter of education. After some costly experimenting which resulted in the loss of many sales, four strong letters made up the series:

Letter No. 1: Reliability.

Letter No. 2: Initial cost.

Letter No. 3: Cost of operation and maintenance.

Letter No. 4: All-around serviceability—safety, speed and comfort.

Supplementary matter took the form of circulars, mailing cards, testimonials, records of achievements in contests and so forth. The day a prospect was sufficiently interested to reply, a personal salesman was put on his trail but the preliminary, educational work was carried on by letters. And it was not done by one letter; it was a series in which the strong arguments were presented in the most effective order.

Then, the correspondent should make sure that he is using arguments and not mere assertions. Look over the mail that comes to your desk tomorrow morning and notice how many letters are filled with assertions, statements, claims. It is strange how many letter writers overlook the necessity for facts—logic—“reasons why.”

Here is a follow-up letter sent out by a large concern that is a familiar type:

Dear Sir:

"On September 18th we quoted you a special price of \$6.00 each, f.o.b. Cleveland, Ohio, on our 3-gallon polished copper Champion fire extinguisher, but up to the present writing we have heard nothing further from you regarding this matter, and we wish you would let us know whether the price is satisfactory, and whether we may be favored with your kind order.

Yours most sincerely,

THE JONES MANUFACTURING CO.

By *M. O. Williams*

Secretary.

Not one line of salesmanship; not a semblance of an argument; not even a poor reason for buying a Champion, or a bald claim as to its superiority. One can imagine the manager vigorously insisting that fire extinguishers "can't be sold by mail."

If the correspondent is one who looks behind the surface of things, he will learn that arguments which produce the best results observe the laws of direction, of structure and of force.

The law of direction requires that different arguments should work along definite, specific lines so that they will all aim at one point, just as the man selling gas engines brought all his arguments to a focus on the point of "absolute dependability."

The law of structure deals with the arrangement of arguments so that they are clear and follow each other in such a way that the reader is lead along, every letter adding fuel to his interest.

The law of force deals with intensity and may come from arrangement or presentation or both. Style is essential to force but words and sentences will not take the place of arguments.

Test the argument to see that it really is an argument—that it explains or proves or persuades. If your product is a specialty or a luxury your arguments must show a man *why* he should buy it; if it is a staple, you must show him why he should buy *your* product in preference to others. Show him where he can buy, how he can buy and why he should buy—these things are arguments.

Finding NEW ANGLES For Approaching The Prospect

IN MOST *mail-order campaigns the correspondent is trying to market a specific product; there are certain definite and limited arguments that can be used in presenting it. The problem of the correspondent is to use these arguments in a way that will CONNECT the PRODUCT with the PROSPECT'S NEEDS. But while the real arguments may be limited there are an infinite number of ways of using them to relate the product with the individual. Different prospects must be approached from different angles; the point that appeals to one may leave no impression on a dozen others and frequently the SUCCESS of a FOLLOW-UP is DETERMINED by the NUMBER of NEW ANGLES from which a proposition can be presented. How to secure these angles and apply them is the subject of this chapter*

ONE Wednesday morning a storekeeper in southern Texas was leisurely going through his mail. Letters were opened, glanced at, and thrown aside. Suddenly one seemed to hold his attention. He adjusted his glasses and re-read the letter carefully, and then slowly dropped it in the waste basket. Five minutes later, he came back and picked it up, smoothed it out, read it over again thoughtfully, and laid it away in his desk. That evening as he and his wife sat by the lamplight and watched their little boy playing with his blocks on the floor, he reached into his inside pocket and drew out the

letter, and laying it on the table, said, "Jeannette, I am going to buy one of those cash registers."

The silence that ensued was broken by the woman's voice: "Ezra, they cost a lot of money."

His answer was immediate: "But I must have one. I don't want my boy to be a thief, and I don't want to make any other man's boy a thief. Give me the pen and ink."

And while he was making out the order for a cash register, his wife was reading the opening paragraph of the letter which had made the sale:

"If some man should make your boy a thief--

"Feeling as you do about your own child, why do you leave that open, unprotected cash drawer in front of your clerks --other men's boys. They know you have no check on your cash and if one of them steals WHO IS TO BLAME?"

This particular merchant had been called on and demonstrated to by a dozen different cash register salesmen. He has been listed finally as an "unlikely" prospect. One time the company's star salesman had spent a day with this merchant. He had made the most appealing solicitation of which he was capable, yet his man remained unmoved. To the salesman's appeal to protect himself against thievery, the answer was typical of the small town storekeeper, who believes that all men are honest until they are proved otherwise. His attitude was so discouraging that when the salesman entered his name on the daily call report sheet, two big black letters went opposite it—"N. G." The *human* salesman had set this man down as *impossible* to sell.

The machinery of the follow-up of this cash register company grinds just as exceeding fine as the proverbial mills of the gods. Good, bad, and indifferent—all names on the prospect list go into the hopper, for the advertising system, as well as the sales system, of this company, has but one motto: "Every man *can* be sold. We are going to sell every one."

The letter that made the sale was the twentieth the merchant had received, but it had touched the right button at the right time and forth came the order. And the simple, unassuming follow-up which does the seemingly impossible, in a quiet

LETTER NO. 1

MR. DEALER—

THIS IS A. & D., CINCINNATI.

The A. & D. wholesale house covers 2 entire city blocks—sells goods in 15 different states—employs 1000 people—owns and operates 3 factories—has branch offices in New York and Paris with resident buyers—has 39 other buyers. Ships promptly—pays cash—discounts all its bills.

MR. DEALER—PLEASE LISTEN AGAIN—45 years ago A. & D. had only \$1,600 and a small 2 story building—but in the first 15 years A. & D. moved 5 times. 6 years ago A. & D. built this building—cost \$800,000—has 600,000 square feet of floor space—33 different departments.

—NOW MR. DEALER—PLEASE LISTEN AGAIN—The Kossers, A. & D. were not "BIZARDS." They had no especial LUCK—they had no "CINCH" on anyone's trade. There were many others in the SAME line—

BUT MR. DEALER—

Here's how it happened—while others sold the same high quality of merchandise that A. & D. sold—A. & D. SOLD IT CHEAPER. That's the ONE and ONLY way that any house can get business. That's the ONE and ONLY way that A. & D. will TRY to get YOUR business.

LETTER NO. 2

When any ONE House in a town grows BIGGER than ALL the OTHER houses—that even started years ahead of it—it certainly must mean that that house has had the BIGGEST TRADE and the ONLY way that a house can get the BIGGEST TRADE is to offer the BIGGEST INDUCEMENTS—sell the "SAME THING" cheaper than OTHERS sell it. A. & D.'s is the BIGGEST house in Cincinnati and if there really were any OTHER house that offered any BIGGER inducements that House would be the BIGGEST, not A. & D.

LETTER NO. 3

Don't let ANY house feel that it has a MONOPOLY on YOUR trade.

Don't let any house consider YOU as "Sure."

Make the house you DO buy from PAY your trade each time, over and over again—just as you make your clerks win their PROMOTION. Don't buy even a SECOND time from ANY house before you have made OTHER houses figure at "White Heat" for your order.

A house that considers you as "SURE" may not think it necessary to give you the LOWEST prices that another house would, to get you to trade with it. Let A. & D. send you THEIR prices.

LETTER NO. 4

ALL houses will PROMISE to save you money. Some say, "We have a great buying power." Others say, "We discount our bills." But YOU look for the House that says, "WE TAKE THE LEAST PROFIT"—that's the ONLY house that really will sell CHEAPER. For 45 years A. & D. have done business on a "SMALL PROFIT POLICY" and despite every market advance, A. & D. will DELIBERATELY mark their prices the LOWEST.

A. & D. believe in making a SMALL profit and selling "EVERYBODY" rather than making a "BIG PROFIT" and selling only a "FEW."

LETTER NO. 5

If you can buy STANDARD MILL BRANDS from A. & D. CHEAPER, you can sell CHEAPER. And there's more in that than mere dollars and cents because you already have an established trade on these same brands.

This trade knows VALUE; it knows that such-and-such a piece of goods has always sold for such a price. Therefore if you can sell the same thing cheaper, you are bound to HOLD THE TRADE. You can always KEEP business away from your competitors.

LETTER NO. 6

A. & D. never have any "SALES"—never sell you a STANDARD BRAND for LESS than it cost just to make you think that their prices on their entire line are correspondingly low. A. & D. never have any PRIVATE brands that you KNOW NOTHING ABOUT. A. & D. sell only well known brands of standard quality that you know all about and every piece carries the original mill ticket for you to see.

A. & D. maintain a UNIFORM price system the year 'round so that if their prices were NOT the lowest they COULD NOT BE MISTAKEN. Other houses selling lower would be getting A. & D.'s trade.

LETTER NO. 7

A. & D. want you to pick out any standard brand in your store, then write for their prices on it. Put A. & D. to a TEST.

If A. & D.'s price is LOWER than the price you paid, YOU'D be glad to have the difference the next time you buy.

You're a BUSINESS man—you cannot be influenced by either advertising or salesmanship.

You demand that people talk "SENSE" to you—you must have FIGURES, not WORDS. There is only ONE way that ANY house can win your trade—only ONE thing you want to know—

"CAN I GET THE SAME QUALITY AT THE SAME PRICE FOR LESS MONEY?"

MR. DEALER, PLEASE WRITE TO A. & D., CINCINNATI, AND FIND OUT.

LETTER NO. 8

A VERY large part of A. & D.'s stock comes from EUROPE. A. & D. send a BUYER to every foreign market. These buyers meet the manufacturers face to face and drive sharp bargains. This is for YOUR benefit. It enables A. & D. to save you an additional 5% to 7½% and it gives you the whole world to pick your stocks from. You can sell your own town trade dress goods from Paris and Germany, catclothes from Switzerland, hosiery from Germany, France and England, linens from Ireland, France, Germany and Austria—and A. & D. even charge you LESS for them.

LETTER NO. 9

Cincinnati is the ONE most central SHIPPING POINT—Cincinnati is within 36 hours of three-fourths of the dealers of the United States.

Just to buying goods cheap and getting exactly what you order is to have the goods shipped to you PROMPTLY. A. & D. have the force, the stock and the "POLICY" to land your order on board the CARS within 24 hours after it's received.

A. & D. KEEP every promise they make—pay attention to every little detail—don't substitute—don't argue and don't exaggerate.

Here is given the substance of nine successive letters sent out by a wholesale house, each approaching the prospect from a different angle. It is not likely that any one would appeal to all the prospects, but it is likely that some one of them would strike home to Mr. Prospect

modest sort of way, is based on that very thing. The *right* kind of follow-up is bound some day to touch the right chord, approach the prospect from the right angle and get the order. Having the same old product, the same old proposition and the same old prospect, the only thing possible is to vary the presentation—approach from a different angle. The success of more than one campaign has been attributed to mere persistence when in truth, the success was due to the fact that somewhere in the series of letters there was one which approached the subject from the angle that touched the susceptible spot. This in a follow-up letter may be any one of a dozen different appeals—a bit of sentiment—an appeal to the emotions—or a hard-headed piece of reasoning which proves by indisputable figures that the thing to do is to buy.

Every mail-order proposition must be played up from constantly varying angles. The first reason for this is found in the fact that *your* campaign should differ from *others*. A prospect is in the market for a line of goods which you sell. In all probability at least half a dozen other firms sell a similar line—they all want the business. Only the propositions which are unique—which are played up to him differently—are going to impress him.

Then your man may not be a conscious prospect—he may have no notion of buying your product. It is then a matter of education and it is necessary to bring many arguments to bear and approach him from many sides. The appeal that lands one man may have no visible effect on a hundred others and so it is necessary to approach them from every conceivable angle.

“Arguments,” declares the manager of the mail-order campaigns of one of the medium sized Chicago mail-order houses. “can become worn as well as the furniture and fixtures of an establishment. While the arguments in favor of the mail-order business in general and of our goods are the same as ten years ago, yet there are a thousand varying lights and shades with which we can approach the same subject from different angles.

“As our arguments tend to become shopworn, we go through and brighten them up and put them, each year, on a higher plane. For instance, this year we are impressing upon many of our country patrons the fact that there is no greater pleasure than that of having a yearly, semi-yearly, or quarterly celebration, ‘when the goods come from the city.’ We accordingly advise our regular patrons to make it a point to order at cer-

tain regular seasons This seems to be working out very well—we simply approach the prospect from a new angle.

“Another thing, we are drawing points of view from other businesses. For instance, we have lately laid the insurance companies under tribute by using a number of their standard presentations with which to talk the advisability of buying goods from us. The man who buys from us, we tell the patron, is insured just as though he had taken out an insurance policy. We sell him *protection* along with the goods. A series of arguments similar to those used by the best insurance men give us the proposition from the ‘insurance angle’ of selling goods.

“Again, the mail-order houses have been obliged to do some offensive and defensive work. It makes an ideal new angle to call the attention of a farmer to whom we wish to sell a cream separator, for instance, to the fact that he may as well have what the merchant puts aside for bad debts and what the solicitor gets for calling on him. To a man who has been considering merely the strong points of the various machines, this talking point comes at him from an entirely different angle.

“As our arguments become worn by use, we intend to revamp the ones which have stood us in good stead, playing them up from new and more appropriate and interesting angles.”

A correspondence school finds that the appeal which will sell one course is worthless for other courses. The prospect who is interested in a course on draftsmanship or mechanical engineering is most easily reached by pointing out the ease with which he can get a better job or a raise in salary and the great future there is before him. The young man who is interested in the course in journalism is usually most susceptible to visions of social recognition—a person to be pointed out as a successful writer.

A bond house making a specialty of irrigation bonds finds it necessary to do more or less educational work to inspire confidence in this class of paper. Accordingly the fourth follow-up is a letter from a prominent bank president in which he explains these bonds are a desirable form of investment. The bond house is a substantial institution and carries a large account with the bank so the president is very willing to have his name used in this way. It makes a new angle—an outside opinion.

One of the methods of introducing a new angle into a proposition is that which is based on some scheme so unusual that its uniqueness holds over to the presentation. Such a one was used

years ago by a firm of advertising experts in Philadelphia who secured returns by this unusual angle of presentation:

Dear Sir:

Did it ever occur to you that if you were to start with one cent, and double your money each day for thirty days, you would then have more than five million dollars?

Here are the figures to prove it :

1st day	\$.01	16th day	\$ 327.68
2nd day	.02	17th day	655.36
3rd day	.04	18th day	1,310.72
4th day	.08	19th day	2,621.44
5th day	.16	20th day	5,242.88
6th day	.32	21st day	10,485.76
7th day	.64	22nd day	20,971.52
8th day	1.28	23rd day	41,943.04
9th day	2.56	24th day	83,886.08
10th day	5.12	25th day	167,772.16
11th day	10.24	26th day	335,544.32
12th day	20.48	27th day	671,088.64
13th day	40.96	28th day	1,342,177.28
14th day	81.92	29th day	2,684,354.56
15th day	163.84	30th day	5,368,709.12

When we started our present advertising business, we put just \$2.00 into an advertisement, and got \$4.00 back. A week later we put \$4.00 into a larger advertisement and got \$10.00 back. We kept on doubling our money, and, in a few weeks, without putting in any additional capital, we had a good, profitable business. We were both earning good salaries at the time, and the only reason we did not use more money in starting the business was because we didn't need it. If we had put our original capital into a bank, it would now amount to about \$2.16. By putting it into advertising, and doubling it just a few times, we have converted it into thousands of dollars.

Very truly yours,

Adams & Adams

There is really nothing new in the argument brought out in this letter but it approaches the prospect from a different angle.

Where the product is one which moves off better under certain conditions than under others, the regular plan of follow-up may be varied to take advantage of any unusual situations that arise. An Iowa firm selling gasoline engines and pumps

Dear Mr. Edmunds:

If I ask you a question will you answer me honestly?
Will you help me start the New Year right?

You wanted a farm home.

You were interested in my advertisement and you answered it.

While I have sold thousands of acres of land, I failed to sell YOU.

I KNOW my proposition is RIGHT. I invested in this land and induced relatives and friends to do likewise.

I believe the land to be the best on the market at the price; I believe that the purchase contract offers more inducements and is superior in every way to the contracts issued by other companies.

I believe my company is selling more land to inquirers than any other company, but the fact that I have not sold YOU convinces me that there is something wrong with my literature or my system of salesmanship. I want to know what this defect is. I enclose a two cent stamp for a reply and ask for a few minutes of your valuable time to find out.

Please advise me what is wrong with my literature; my letter; with ME.

Is it possible that my literature is too strong? That it reads like "hot air?" (I assure you that I am honest and conscientious in the premises and believe every word that I have written.) Is it because you do not believe the statements made by me, by the expert who examined the land, and by practical gardeners and fruit growers who are obtaining results in the region?

Were my letters too long? Did they bore you? Did you throw them in the waste paper basket?

Have I insulted your intelligence by being too presumptuous? Did you think I was trying to "bamboozle" you into buying? If so, I can only say in defense that my prophetic vision saw the wonderful possibilities for homeseekers and investors in the opening of a new region which is destined to enjoy a phenomenal boom, and I was anxious for you to reap substantial benefit along with others who were grasping the opportunity.

One of the most successful angles that can be given to a long follow-up is a weakness of human nature with every man to feel flattered interests himself in a proposition. This letter, which was sent out to a inquiry, sold about \$50,000 worth

I believe that land in the Security tract is worth \$100 per acre and I believe that it will bring that price twelve months after being placed in cultivation. I base my belief on the fact that the land is capable of producing from \$100 to \$500 per acre annually in fruits and vegetables. Under the terms of the company's contract you will, in twelve months, have paid only \$6 per acre for land which I consider worth \$100. To me this seems like an extraordinary chance for a most profitable investment. Had you believed what I stated in my letters and literature, you would have felt that you couldn't afford to pass it up.

You wanted land and I failed to "land" you. I am disappointed with myself because of my failure and I want you to advise me, straight from the shoulder, where my system is weak. You have the nerve to tell me and I will consider it a great personal favor if you will do so. I want to know my faults and correct them.

I have had a lot of experience in the land business and am very successful, but I don't "know it all" by a long shot, or I would have sold you.

Now help me to start the New Year right. Tell me how I can increase my business by selling land to a man who THINKS JUST AS YOU THINK. Tell me what sort of argument would have appealed most to you had I used it.

I am not too old to learn, and the fact that I am asking you for information in a straightforward, manly way, should convince you that I am doing my utmost to obtain knowledge from the right school.

Will it interest you to have me tell you more about the Security tract, the progress of development, and the successes of investors in land in the tract?

Awaiting your reply, which I shall treasure and read with the keenest of interest, I am,

Yours most sincerely,

Harry L. Pack

Pres. The Security Development Company.

series is to ask the prospect, point-blank, why he has not bought. It when his opinion is asked, and in this way a prospect frequently thousand inquirers who had evinced no interest beyond the original of land—its readers sold themselves

took immediate advantage of the dry summer of 1910 by leading out its third follow-up with this paragraph:

"From all over the country we are receiving letters telling us: 'Rain is scarce and windmills are almost useless. Send us one of your Aqua Pump Jacks.'"

This was found to make a strong appeal because of climatic conditions. It was a new angle and placed the proposition in a clear light, showing up its desirability.

A new angle is especially desirable in introducing products advertised indirectly, such as the recommendation of a doctor or a dentist of some article having a therapeutic value.

A dental cream was put on the market in a very short time through an extensive follow-up system conducted by the manufacturers. Dentists are not only furnished with samples but they are written on every plausible pretext. The company takes pains to approach the prospect with an "ethical" talking point as well as an exponent of good selling. A slight change in the formula of the tooth paste presented an opportunity for the correspondent to write the dentist, playing up the strict adherence to high ethical standards:

Dear Sir:

"In order to add still further to the therapeutic value of DENTO and the facility of application, a slight change in the formula has recently been made. A greater refinement of the product has been secured, which enables us to offer a compound of rare chemical purity.

Knowing how difficult it is for the dentist to make a complete analysis to determine the correctness of our formula, we feel it our duty to the profession to place before you the accompanying report from the well-known Lederle Anti-Toxin Laboratories of New York City.

The distribution of this analysis is, by Dr. Lederle's request, restricted to the dental and medical profession, among whom his work is recognized as authoritative.

Very truly yours,

THE BATES & HOLMES COMPANY.

This letter cleverly combined the ethical and sales appeal and was the most successful one in a large series.

One of the generally recognized principles in all selling is that the appeal to fear is logically wrong. Fear paralyzes. Only as a last resort—if at all—should the prospect be "scared" into giving an order. The quest for a new angle should not lead the correspondent into this error.

Figures convince when general statements do not gain attention. The more general the statement, the weaker it is. The two paragraphs below illustrate the lack of these principles:

"Think of the worry, trouble and possible grief the cautious man avoids by properly protecting himself from chain lightning. No matter how much insurance you carry, your loss cannot be replaced when lightning kills your loved ones or burns your house and all its furnishings to the ground.

"Last week lightning struck, in the average, twelve persons or properties in every country. This week it may be you, yourself, will lose life or property through insufficient lightning protection. This is a serious matter--far too serious to forget or put off--and too important to take chances on unreliable devices for lightning protection."

A new manager, coming to the house, rewrote the letter to make it conform to right principles:

"Think of the security you, as a property owner, will feel in knowing that your property is protected from loss by lightning.

"Think of the comfort that is yours when you know that no matter how often electrical storms rage, your loved ones are safe.

"Attached we give several clippings from papers published in the United States within the last two or three weeks, showing specifically that there have been forty-eight deaths from lightning where there was no protection by lightning rods. Also, there has been a total property destruction of \$487,000 in that period of time--these losses on unprotected property."

See how much more strongly the facts play up when the positive side of the proposition is brought out. Make the

appeal positive, not negative; appeal to hope, desire, ambition, prosperity, rather than to fear, dread, despair, failure.

There is probably no other field that offers a wider range of talking points than selling land. The arguments and the angles for connecting with a man's interest are infinite. The necessity for testing out different propositions and presentations is shown by the fact that frequently talking points considered unimportant are the ones that grip the attention of the prospect.

One of the first concerns to enter the Florida field began its campaign in a conventional way:

"Florida--30 hours away--with a warm winter sun and a soil so rich that it will yield a crop of real gold dollars for a little perfunctory scratching."

And for a while there was such a demand for Florida land that these shelf-worn arguments brought in the contracts but as soon as competition began to appear the public could not be reached by bumptious generalities.

So the follow-up came to the rescue and the first step was to dispense with the old letters filled with "hot air." The new series contained no strictly last letter. Each letter was written individually, and on a single point. The premises on which the new series of letters were built was that if a person is interested enough in Florida land to spend the postage to answer a Florida land advertisement, there must be some one point on which he can be sold. The analysis of the sales showed the reasons why men would buy Florida land: provision for old age; want of a home; profitable investment; desire to get back to the soil; Florida's warm winter climate.

"Florida's warm winter climate" might not seem a valid reason for making an investment in Florida land, but it actually is, as shown by the results from a letter starting in this way:

"A water melon in a show window today would attract a curious crowd.

"Down in Florida, water melons are ripe, and happy, independent, shirt-sleeved men are enjoying the warm breezes of the winter sun."

This letter found the spark of life in so many of the supposedly dead ones, that the original arrangement, which had been to send the letters out about three weeks apart, was changed so that one went out every two weeks, and the results were so encouraging that work was begun on the list in earnest.

For a long time it was purely experimental. It was aimed to make every letter carry with it a piece of literature concerning the land on sale. At one time a copy of a Florida daily was mailed out. It contained articles about the tract of land this concern had on sale and also a number of photographs of well-to-do citizens who had wrested their wealth from Florida's soil. Practically every claim that had been made in the letters and literature that had gone before were substantiated in the paper and carried the conviction that news items always do to the reader—same old facts and arguments but presented from a new angle.

The letter which accompanied this paper was designed to make the man read the paper—nothing more, apparently, yet the student of psychology might read between the lines. Here is the opening of the letter:

"A number of men who started out to die poor have acquired wealth spite of themselves. It is hard to keep from getting rich in a state where"—and so forth.

The next letter carried with it a small pasteboard box containing rich black soil from the partially drained Everglades, which was the land that this particular concern was marketing:

"In your section, this soil is worth \$15 a ton as fertilizer.

"You can buy it for \$30 an acre and pay on the easiest kind of terms."

This was a distinctly new and clever angle. The mental process of the man who stood with the letter in one hand and the first finger and thumb of the other feeling the moist rich black earth, seemed not only to make Florida a reality, but gave him a new idea of the value of the land as land.

The necessity for getting an outside viewpoint was shown by a salesman's report. In a canvass he incidentally remarked that the land would not only increase in value rapidly but in the meantime could be used as "an ideal winter home." It struck a responsive chord in the prospect and the salesman played up the point and closed the sale then and there.

This was looked upon in the office as a joke—that a class of investors who bought ten acres of twenty-dollar land and paid for it on small instalments should think seriously about a winter home. But the new angle was incorporated into a letter that was sent to the try-out list:

"Spend a couple of weeks next winter on your own southern plantation.

"It costs less to live in Florida"--and so forth.

This opening paragraph is an index to the whole letter which met with such success on a worn out list that it was placed in the regular follow-up and proved one of the strong pullers.

The statement that a small bungalow could be built on the land immediately so it might be utilized as a winter home, visualized the proposition; presented it in terms that appealed to the prospect. It made things, which before had appeared only in the abstract, seem real and concrete. When you get right down to the bone of things, this selling point was merely a new angle. But it was the angle that touched a responsive chord—the same chord that moves a man who can't afford it, to mortgage his household goods to buy an automobile.

The point of practical application in this company's experience is the idea of analyzing the angles by which the prospect may be reached and then logically following out the analysis so that when a series of letters have reached a man and been read he has been approached with a clincher on every point that might possibly close the sale. Those things are not only applicable, they're essential to the successful use of the follow-up in *your* business. The last letter of the series should go out with the firm and honest conviction back of it that if this letter does not hit the spot the prospect cannot be sold. *And after that letter has gone, it is time to prepare an entirely new series.*

Getting The Order By BETTERING The Offer

IT IS COMPARATIVELY *easy to interest a prospect—but it takes real salesmanship to get his order. In many letter-campaign failures, the trouble is in making the offer. This chapter takes up ways of presenting a proposition and methods for bettering the offer—limiting the time, scaling the price, adding premiums, making special terms, and so on. But these are EDGED TOOLS that must BE HANDLED SKILLFULLY, for there is danger in cutting prices and in shutting the door so that the house cannot come back later with another proposition. How the offer may be bettered without these harmful effects is here shown*

THE skilled salesman has two methods of making the sale—either he “talks up the goods” or he talks “bargains.”

The salesman studies his customer and learns to recognize quickly whether it is the goods or the price that is making him hesitate—and then shapes his arguments to overcome that particular objection.

The long-distance salesman can only judge of his customers as a class but he knows that the ordinary prospect loves a bargain—likes a concession in some form. It is therefore safe to play up to this tendency. You must depend upon your knowledge of sales psychology to interest the prospect until he replies—then it is possible to get a line on the special arguments that will appeal to him most strongly.

A few years ago, a clothing salesman finding himself out of a job on account of the failure of the house for which he worked, conceived the idea of selling clothes direct to customers by mail. He realized that his offer must be unusually attractive to get action from the distant prospect, and so he advertised a suit of clothes made to measure according to sample. With every suit of clothes he offered an extra pair of trousers *free*. The price of the suit was low, possibly lower than the local retailer could have quoted, but it was not the price that impressed the prospect so strongly as the extra trousers which he threw in. He recognized the "something for nothing" weakness in human nature and played upon it successfully. He turned out good clothing and by giving satisfaction, built up an enormous business. This successful mail-order merchant afterward expressed the conviction that if he had cut the price of a suit two dollars and dropped his free offer he would have failed. The appeal of the free article gripped the attention of prospects, and by limiting the time of the offer, induced them to order at once. The special inducement pulled the first order—satisfactory service pulled the repeat orders.

The secret of this success was a knowledge of human nature—a clever idea in the presentation of the offer. For the correspondent must realize that it is not the proposition itself which determines the success of a business but the manner in which the proposition is presented—the cleverness in putting the offer.

A manufacturer of silk thread rubbed an Alladin's lamp when he conceived the idea of giving away stamped embroidery pieces free with a certain number of spools of silk—but not enough silk to complete the piece. Originally conceived as a scheme to induce the needle women to insist upon getting this particular brand of thread from the dealer, it rapidly developed into a mail-order business that literally swamped the manufacturer. The offer of the free pattern touched the vulnerable "something for nothing" spot and laid the foundation for an enormous business.

The success of the house did not originate in the superiority of its silk thread nor the low price at which it was sold but the appeal to the bargain instinct—the way in which the proposition was presented to the public.

Another clothing house made an appeal to the bargain instinct by offering not only a suit of clothes but an entire outfit

from socks to hat for ten dollars. Advertising a suit worth twenty dollars to be sold for ten dollars does not carry conviction. But listing a dozen articles with the price opposite each and the totals cut in half to make the selling price, appeals to the eye seems to prove the proposition a bargain—and in this case, made the business one of the sensations of the mail-order industry.

A mail-order man soon learns to play upon another weakness of human nature: the tendency of a man to grasp at an opportunity which appears limited. This trait of human nature is inconsistent but it does not take a salesman long to recognize the possibilities that it opens up. Even the street faker understands the weakness—he has “just a half dozen” left and all day long it is “just a half dozen” left. He plays the limited number as his strongest talking point in closing sales—and it works.

This is possibly the most familiar method of getting the customer to order—limiting the time of the offer. Numerous reasons may be given for limiting the offer but the reason must be plausible to the reader or he will think it is nothing less than a catch-penny scheme. Here is a letter showing how the idea was incorporated in the letter of one company :

Dear Sir:

"February 15', 1910, will be your last chance to get a Standard machine at the old price of \$50.00. We have decided to restrict our output in the future to the new style Challenge, which sells for \$65.00. On February 15th the patterns for the old machine will be broken up, and the stock not disposed of will be sold at wholesale to a city firm which is in the market for them.

The new model is an improved machine, and has a greater capacity--well worth the additional \$15.00--but the fact remains that there is no other machine on the market today equal to our Standard at \$50.00, and you cannot afford to let this opportunity slip for getting one. Afterwards, if you want to turn it in for the new model, we will allow you nearly the entire purchase price, depending on the condition of the machine. So this presents an opportunity which will not be presented again, and February 15th is positively the last date on which it can be accepted. Better order now before it is too late.

Very truly yours,

THE CENTRAL MACHINERY & SUPPLY COMPANY.

Many businesses have been founded on this idea of making the public think there are only a few articles left; that they are likely to miss something they can never get again.

A few years ago, a house manufacturing bicycles saw nothing but bankruptcy ahead, and in one desperate effort to turn the stock on hand, represented themselves as selling agents and advertised "only a few of these well known makes left and we are closing them out to make room for the new models."

An idea, adopted with the sole hope of increasing the salvage of a sinking concern, let loose the genii of a great business and several factories were soon rushed to fill the orders.

One day the fact dawned on the manager of an agricultural implement house that a series of letters were being sent out that repeated the talking points given in the printed matter so he incorporated in a special offer the psychological stimulus that comes from a limited offer:

Dear Sir:

"We have been having some correspondence with you relative to the Wondro machine. I have taken special pains to go through the correspondence that our sales manager has had with you, and noted the location of your farm, and learned from the tax list of the county that you are owner of 245 acres of land.

We want you to have a machine because your influence as a land-owner extends over at least a township. Therefore, I have myself selected your name from the list for your township and I'm going to make you the following offer:

(Here offer is given in detail.)

Now, note carefully that this offer, in order to continue in force, must be accepted within three days from the receipt of this letter. As a special representative of the company you will be granted privileges in your township that no other buyer will have. So we feel obliged to limit the time on this to three days. This gives you the opportunity to become our township representative, and is also fair to us, for in case you should not desire to accept the offer, we can secure one of your neighbors.

Very truly yours,

M. B. Andrews.

President, The Western Farm Machine Co.

Without misrepresenting the proposition in any particular, without violating the ethics of the highest business standards this man was able to impress upon his prospects the idea that they would be the losers if they did not accept his offer—and this is the very essence of successful salesmanship by mail.

Limiting the time in which a proposition can be accepted is applied very successfully by land and investment concerns. The reason why the price may be advanced is so obvious in the sale of land, for instance, that it is most effective. Naturally, each buyer makes the unsold property more valuable, so that the time limit carries weight. A marketer of five and ten acre tracts of southern land wrote to his original list, limiting the time for sales at the old rate:

"Don't send me any money after the 15th. If you do, it will surely be returned, unless you are willing to pay me the new rate of \$30.00 per acre instead of \$25.00.

"I have some regard for the men who made inquiries when our proposition was young--before it fairly got on its feet. That is why I am including you in this offer--because you were one of our original inquirers.

"Remember, no acceptance of the old rate after the above date. The land is even now worth more."

In a follow-up campaign there is the constant temptation to hurry along the sale by scaling the price—a practice that must be handled with the greatest care. While prices can be scaled two rules should invariably be observed: make the offer only after the prospect has been thoroughly drummed, and always give a plausible reason why the price is reduced. Great care must be taken to guard against making a special offer—particularly a cut price—to a customer who has bought.

The usual reasons given for scaling prices are: goods have been picked over and soiled and otherwise damaged for sale but not for use; few goods are left and buyers now will get the benefit of the remnants, the "come back" argument, in which it is stated that some of the goods have been returned after payments have been made on them and will be re-sold at a lower price.

Where the goods do not change in grade or quality, it is necessary to make plausible the price reduction. A letter used

by a prominent music teacher in Chicago never fails to bring into line a large number of students who cannot be lined up to take his regular course:

Dear Sir:

In response to numerous inquiries, I am forming a class limited to 500.

Your name has been selected from a large list as one who will appreciate the privilege of entering this class at a special rate.

THIS SPECIAL RATE IS LIMITED TO THE FIRST 500 WHO FILL OUT THE APPLICATION BLANK ENCLOSED AND RETURN WITH \$5.00.

This Class Course is just as personal and individual as my \$20.00 course. You will be given the same private instruction as though you enrolled at the single tuition fee and your lessons will be independent of the others."

Very truly yours,

Harry L. Peck

In this letter this postscript is utilized to emphasize installment payment:

"P. S. If inconvenient to send us \$5.00, send \$1.00 and the Scholarship will be held for you until you can remit the balance of \$4.00."

Two distinct inducements are brought out in this letter—a cut in the price and easy terms of payment. Selling on installment carries none of the objectionable features of price-cutting and is a legitimate method of bettering the offer. If the price is to be cut it is advisable to enclose a coupon or certificate that is redeemable at a certain figure and have this apply on the price. By having it numbered, signed and sealed an impression of actual value can be attached to it, so that the article sold is not cheapened in the eyes of the prospect. The correspondent who is tempted to slash his prices must not overlook the psychological effect that the cut price has on the prospect in cheapening the product, unless there is some satisfying reason

for that action. The minute the price is cut the tendency is to hold back an order to see if the price will not be cut still further, but by assigning some good reason for sending the certificate or coupon, this objection is overcome.

A correspondence school uses as a final offer a guarantee of a position to a graduate. Here are three paragraphs from a letter showing how the guaranteed position, the cut in price, the coupon enclosure and the easy payments are all worked in without cheapening the product in any way, yet each adds to the impression that if the offer is not accepted it will be an opportunity lost:

"Let me explain, the regular price of our course with the service of our Free Employment Bureau has been advanced to \$40.00 cash or \$50.00 on time payments. But even so, we have more students now than we ever had before. BUT WE MUST HAVE MORE STUDENTS AT ONCE. From all over the country, our various offices are being flooded with letters from big business houses, asking us to supply them with salesmen from the list of our students during this winter and the coming spring. The question is: how are we going to increase the number of our students sufficiently to supply this great demand?

"If you will read carefully the SPECIAL application blank we enclose, and also the Ten Dollar Certificate, you will understand just how we propose to do this. That is, by allowing a limited number of men who have written us previously to enroll on the old terms of \$30.00 cash or \$35.00 on time payments, AND BY ALSO ALLOWING THE ENCLOSED CERTIFICATE TO COUNT AS TEN DOLLARS ON THE COST OF THE COURSE ON ANY ONE OF THREE PAYMENT PLANS.

"THIS SPECIAL OFFER HOLDS GOOD FOR THIRTY DAYS ONLY. The date stamped on the application blank and certificate tells you when it expired. Don't wait, however, until the last day of grace before sending in your enrollment. DO IT NOW. The best way NOT to do a thing is to put it off until tomorrow. The man who succeeds is the man who begins tomorrow's tasks today. The sooner you send in your enrollment the sooner you will complete the course and be ready to accept a good position as a traveling salesman."

Here the psychology of salesmanship is shown in a high degree for each inducement seems to add to the value of the course instead of cheapening it. The assurance of a position, a bargain in the cut price, easy method of payment—three

magnets to attract the order and this letter was one of the most effective ever sent out by this school.

One of the most effective offers, especially with farmers, is to allow them an option of different methods of paying for an article. A scheme that is applied successfully is to present different methods of payment in separate letters, making each a little more attractive, and then in the final letter, refer to all the methods enclosing a blank on which the prospect can indicate with a check mark the particular offer that he wants to accept. People like an opportunity to make a choice and even if one finally sends the cash he likes to exercise his judgment in selecting the proposition that appeals to him the strongest.

The convenience afforded may prompt action at times when an actual cut in price would not pull the order. For it must not be forgotten that making it easy to order is one of the fundamental principles that should never be overlooked in presenting a proposition.

Make it so easy to order—so easy that the prospect need scarcely move or write a line, or better still, that he will not need to invest a cent in the beginning, and the percentage of sales is bound to increase. This explains the popularity of the coupon, the small informal order blank attached to one corner of an advertisement, so the buyer need not hunt up paper and write a letter ordering the goods according to specifications. All he needs to do is to write his name and address on the little triangle or square of paper, check off the name of the article he wants, stick it in an envelope, address it to the sender, and mail it. If he had to hunt up pen, ink and paper he would be more inclined to put it off “until tomorrow”—and he will never again be interested so easily.

Book publishers and dealers in specialties have increased their business manifold by use of the coupon idea, and in making the offer no correspondent or publicity man can overlook the desirability of making it easy to order. As described in a previous chapter, there are many ways of keeping the price in the background and the follow-up writer will do well to keep in mind two truths in presenting a proposition: make it physically easy to order and make the payment *seem* easy.

How these ideas are practically applied is shown by a magazine agency. As publishers fix the price at which the agencies must accept subscriptions, one agency cannot better the offers

of its competitors as far as price is concerned, but an eastern firm multiplied its sales by making it easier to order by this proposition:

Dear Sir:

"The easiest--safest--most satisfactory way to place your general order for magazine subscriptions for the coming year is to proceed as follows:

1. On the attached order blank write the names of the magazines which you wish with the names and addresses of those to whom each magazine is to be sent.
2. Put the order blank in the enclosed, addressed envelope and mail to us at once.
3. Never mind prices--YOU NEED NOT ENCLOSE CHECK.

Upon receipt of your letter we will at once enter your subscriptions with the respective publishers, advancing the money ourselves to pay for them. We will then bill you for the magazines ordered at the lowest possible price (see our guaranty below) and allow you ten or fifteen days, if you desire it, for payment of your bill."

Very truly yours,

Black & Black

Bettering the offer by allowing easy terms is an increasingly popular way. It is perfectly legitimate and does not call for any apology. One firm began the fourth letter in a four-letter series with this paragraph:

"We have hesitated to mention it as it is a rather delicate subject but possibly you are not able to pay the full amount at one time and would rather have the payments split up into monthly instalments. If this is so, we will be glad to accommodate you."

But this letter was lacking in tact. Don't insult the prospect or embarrass him by intimating that he has to buy a \$10.00 article on instalments. Take the attitude that instalments may be preferable for business reasons and assume that it is so in his case.

Many firms use the "introductory offer" until it is literally worn out. Then a final appeal is made to order within a certain

time "as we have decided to withdraw our special introductory bargain offer." Originally this was an effective appeal, but it has been overworked by concerns having no introductory offer except on paper—their offers do not ring true; the prospect recognizes them as a selling scheme and nothing more and refuses "to bite." Because of this fact the public has become suspicious of all introductory propositions.

One firm selling a set of mechanical books to tradesmen at the fixed price of \$20 is limited in its talking points entirely to new angles and the use of a set of blue prints as a premium. Usually the blue prints are held in reserve as an extra inducement. One day the correspondent, his old arguments exhausted, wrote a letter offering to sell the set of blue prints for \$20 and as a quick inducement, the company would throw in as a premium the mechanical encyclopedias. The letter went to the same old list—for there is only one class to which the proposition appeals—and the orders came in at a surprising rate. The offer was given the reverse English and pulled. It is only the less resourceful correspondent who thinks it is necessary to cut the price in order to get more business.

There are two methods of adding premiums—one by adding a premium at a time until two or three items have been thrown in—and the other is to add a number or give a choice of several and stop at that. The best results are usually obtained by adding a substantial premium, or one that is never offered for sale, with one letter, so as to avoid the appearance of bettering the offer with each letter.

A very successful letter—one which secured large and immediate returns—contained this offer:

"The price of Blank's Manual is \$3.00, but as a special inducement for immediate action, we will not only send for this amount a full cloth and gold copy of the book, but we will also send without cost a copy of our famous little business pamphlet, 'Short Cuts'—32 pages of ways to save time and effort in the day's work. This is an unusual offer and subject to withdrawal on short notice. Wrap \$3.00 in this letter and send today."

Another method of getting results from a follow-up, without lowering the price, is that of splitting the proposition up and offering it to several. A townsite company putting a proposition

on the market calling for an investment of \$1,000, found it profitable to divide it up among ten people at \$100 each. The letter explains itself:

Dear Sir:

Can you raise \$100.00 in three years?

Will you be one of ten persons to form a co-operative saving and investment club, each member subscribing \$100.00 (to be paid at the rate of \$2.50 per month) if we find nine other persons? If you can do this, you will secure absolute ownership to an unincumbered and undivided one-tenth interest in ten separate pieces of property--one choice building lot in each of the ten most rapidly growing young cities in America. This is the safest, sanest, most popular investment ever offered. Don't you think so?

Read the enclosed Ten City Club Plan carefully. Do not send us any money until we write you the names of the other nine club members. If you wish to join the club, sign your name in any one of the ten blank spaces on the last printed page of the enclosed agreement and mail it to us. Get your friends to join and sign with you. If you can get nine of them besides yourself we will pay you \$50.00 in cash for your services.

Very truly yours,

HALIDAY INVESTMENT COMPANY.

A "split up" proposition of this kind is one that will appeal to a large number who have been interested for several months. It offers them a chance to participate in the benefits—to make an actual investment and own something—and yet costs only one-tenth of the original price. Many who were shut out on the \$1,000 basis can easily become participants on the \$100 basis, especially when the payments are spread over a period of three years. This is a suggestive way of changing the proposition to fit the purse. The offer is made more attractive than it would have been by slashing prices.

Many kinds of propositions, both good and bad, are made as an aside to strengthen the offer. One of the most abused is offering the patron a special agency or agency terms. This offer is sometimes used in the first letter, although entirely unnecessary. Except on a country list, this is seldom of real value, and even then it is of doubtful expediency, because

so often it is not a bona fide proposition but a selling scheme and nothing more.

The follow-up writer must forever be on his guard to avoid killing sales or antagonizing old customers by bettering his offers. Nothing is more annoying to an old customer than to pay a full price without hesitancy, for a product only to find later that others, who held off or exhibited a bargaining spirit, were better treated than he.

While the avoidance of such an error is merely a matter of follow-up detail to cut the name off the solicitation list the minute that the customer orders, yet it is very difficult, particularly in using purchased or exchanged lists, to avoid circularizing the customer. Perhaps the best way to avoid this is by checking the outgoing soliciting letters against the customer list. Even with such precautions it is possible that the customer may have ordered at the regular rate, and that the soliciting letter offering a reduction may cross the incoming letter with the order. In this case, there is nothing to do but to give the customer, who has ordered, immediate benefit of the offer. Not only that, but it must be done in such a way that he will not take offense nor be led to hold off in ordering in the future.

Another thing to guard against is not to offer too much in the first letter. One correspondence school in its first letter to a prospect offered a free scholarship, textbooks and other equipment at half price and on easy instalment payments and promised assistance in finding employment after completing the course—so much that the whole thing looked “fishy,” as the prospect described it. He was scared away; the school was too anxious to get his application. If it had merely played up the advantages of its course in the first letter it would doubtless have enlisted him. At least part of the offers should be held in reserve for the follow-up.

Finally, the point should be emphasized again that in scaling prices lies the greatest danger in follow-up work. The tendency, especially of the man inexperienced in follow-ups, is to take what seems to be the easiest method of getting an order—scaling prices.

Price cutting should be the last step that is resorted to, and then only when that particular item is not to be sold again at any price. Only for actually cleaning out a lot of leftover goods should the price be scaled.

The only safe way to scale the price is to scale the offer at the same time. A correspondence school of law, failing to interest a prospect in its complete law course, offers an "Elementary Law Course" at half the price. This is legitimate and good business for if the prospect completes the shorter course and is satisfied he is likely to go on with the additional course. Another school scales the price of a course from \$30 to \$25 to \$20 to \$15 and finally to \$10, but each time it lops off something that is not included, making it plain that while he pays less he gets less.

The same end is gained by the manufacturer of electrical washing machines. If the prospect refuses to respond to the regular follow-up bombardment, a letter is sent making him a proposition on a cheaper machine, run by hand instead of power. Here are three paragraphs from the letter:

"I will send you any one of these machines on the same terms offered on the motor washer. Just tell me which you select and I will send it freight prepaid on thirty days' free trial. Use it for a month before investing a penny. Then pay in cash or in little instalments, just as you prefer.

The fact is this: the hand washer saves all the wear on clothes, the same as the motor washer, and it saves enough in the actual cost of your washing to more than pay the weekly instalments. It is cheaper, therefore, to have the washer than go without it.

"Then the question is this: will the motor washer, which makes water power or electricity do all the work, be worth the difference in cost? That is for you to decide."

Such schemes as this are legitimate. They enable a firm to sell some prospects who would never buy the higher priced article. But the price is not cut nor is the product cheapened in the eyes of the customer.

Unless there is some such way by which the proposition can be scaled as well as the price, it should be strictly avoided. So well is this understood that a number of firms are now playing up the point in their advertising matter that no matter how many letters the prospect may receive from the firm, he will never get an offer that cuts a penny from the first offer. The proposition can be strengthened by the use of premiums or other inducements or better terms but the price should remain fixed unless the proposition, too, is scaled down.

What To Do When The Follow-up SPLITS

THE FOLLOW-UP *is not automatic in its operation. A whole series of letters may be prepared but at any time a reply may come in that calls for SPECIAL ATTENTION—the prospect may be taken care of by another series of letters aimed to answer his particular queries—and when they are answered he may raise points that will again split the follow-up. The letter must be SPECIALIZED to fit the prospect's case—it may call for a dictated message, or forms may be used if they answer his questions. What to do when the follow-up splits and how to specialize your letter-campaign is the subject of this chapter*

A BUSINESS man has a product that can be put on the market by mail. He prepares a set of sales letters with which to follow up a list of properties. Forms are prepared to answer anticipated inquiries, these to be followed up until orders result, or it becomes reasonably certain that the prospect will not buy. Theoretically everything is taken care of automatically—much as a screw-cutting machine feeds the rod of steel in at one end and drops the finished screws at the other.

This would be a perfect money-getting scheme, *if it would work*. But, like the familiar poultry problem—making a dollar a head on several thousand hens—it simply does not work out—and there you are.

It is much better for the business man who is to use the follow-up, to recognize before he starts that no system will work *impersonally*, automatically turning the seed of inquiries into a harvest of paid orders. If this is recognized, and preparation made accordingly, the loss consequent upon readjustment of plans in the midst of a campaign will be made unnecessary.

The experience of an old established firm, starting in business in 1898, put out a follow-up on a carefully-compiled list that illustrates one extreme of how a follow-up may split. This firm started in to sell business devices by mail. As is common in such instances, a "leader" was selected, combining the best of values and a low price. The names were carefully selected from the best list of a defunct firm in the same line, and addresses were verified before the series were mailed. The follow-up was well prepared and minor errors which might have affected returns adversely were eliminated by systematic try-outs.

As the selling price of the leader was put at one dollar and seventy-five cents, the series was made up of five letters; the first two carrying circulars; the last two were "special-offer" letters. The series was put out to a list of eight thousand names. The time between numbers one and two was ten days, between the remaining letters, fifteen days.

The record sheet showed the following returns:

	Orders	Inquiries
First letter	976	4
Second letter	1886	13
Third letter	480	4
Fourth letter	2218	16
Fifth letter	491	18
Total	6051	55

The remarkable thing about this campaign, aside from the high sales percentage, is the small number of "splits"—inquiries from prospects on points not made clear by the follow-up letter and literature. The reasons for this were: age and known responsibility of the firm making the offer; staple quality of appliance offered for sale, combined with its low price; skill in preparation of letters and accompanying advertising matter; and, care and good judgment exercised in selection of list. This assembly of reasons made the follow-up a record-breaker.

The other extreme is shown by another record.

An inventor of a new style incubator formed a stock company and made up several hundred machines. About two hundred of these were sold through the personal efforts of the stockholders. A mail-order campaign was decided upon and advertisements were placed in five farm papers. They produced a list of about three thousand names. To this list fifteen thousand letters were sent. Individual returns from the first three letters were not kept, but the record sheet showed these results:

	Original Orders	Inquiries	Final Orders
First three letters . . .	11	618	16
Fourth letter	4	127	14
Fifth letter	3	87	11
Total	18	832	41

This shows how a follow-up series can split. The reasons for these splits came from a variety of causes, which might apply with similar certainty to any campaign: youth of firm; organized competition already in the field; lack of definiteness in selling-matter (the catalogue accompanying letter No. 1 was particularly lacking in specific information); insufficient thought in wording advertising so as to shut out curiosity-seekers.

The grand total of sales, fifty-nine, at an average price of \$10 per incubator, or, receipts of only \$590 on a fifteen thousand letter campaign, shows—as well as the loss that can come from wrong campaigning—the necessity for taking care of the inquiries that result when the follow-up splits.

Granted that the ideal follow-up campaign would sell without inquiries, yet there are very few propositions in which one can afford to hazard the preparation of an entire series, or to neglect the personal treatment of inquiries. One successful correspondent says on this point:

“We have watched the trend of buyers from follow-ups, and carefully prepared data show us that as each year passes, buyers want more information and more personal treatment.

“In 1900, eighty per cent of our sales on follow-ups were made on the first three letters sent out. Today about the same percentage—eighty per cent—are made after the follow-up splits, after prospects have written in for some special information.”

But the follow-up is not automatic; it is really a delicate

piece of machinery and its results will depend largely upon the personal attention that is given it. If you are selling a single, inexpensive article a series of letters might be written that would take care of all the correspondence, but with an extensive line—different articles sold at various prices and with different terms of payment—there is likely to be more or less correspondence before a sale is made. Upon the completeness of the answers will depend the number of prospects who buy.

Suppose you are advertising a chemical fire extinguisher and a hundred requests come in for catalogues. You send them all the same printed matter and the same letter; a week or two later you may send another letter emphasizing some new point; possibly two or three other letters will follow and then the replies come in—one man wants information about the operation of the apparatus; another asks for special prices in large quantities; a third wants to know if you will send an extinguisher out on trial; a fourth is ready to buy if you will let him pay for it on instalments; another wants to know the difference between your extinguisher and the other fellow's; then someone will want to know whether this extinguisher will lower his insurance rate—and so on, without end.

The minute the follow-up splits—the minute the prospect writes for some special information, it is time to specialize. Give his inquiry individual attention. This does not necessarily mean a dictated letter, for it may be that so many ask about its operation, for instance, that you can have a form letter to give this information. But you have got to make sure that the inquirer gets that particular letter—sending him the balance of the regular follow-up will not answer the purpose.

When you find out what the man is thinking about—the thing that makes him hesitate—you may then want to send out an entire new series of follow-up letters dealing with that particular phase of the subject. Then after you have satisfied him on this point he may jump to some other point on which he is not quite clear and you must give him that information in the same way.

The moral is clear: whenever an inquiry comes in that seeks some special information you have got to drop the regular follow-up and give the inquirer a specialized follow-up that will apply to his individual case.

There are any number of reasons why a person may write in before he orders—he may be greatly interested but want more

information; he may reply out of idle curiosity; he may be ready to buy under certain conditions or he may want to substitute something a little different. To dump all your inquiries into one hopper and run them through the regular follow-up mill would be poor business. After money has been spent in locating a prospect and he is sufficiently interested to write in, the chances are he can be sold but this does not mean that he can be sold with hand-me-down arguments—they may have to be altered before they will fit.

There is no way of foretelling when a follow-up will split. Upon receipt of a catalogue, one prospect may immediately write in for certain information that will call for special attention while another prospect may receive a half dozen letters before he is sufficiently interested to respond, but when he does write, it may be on that same point. The same letter that answered the first prospect's inquiry several weeks before may be used again.

Suppose you are conducting a correspondence school and someone writes in for your printed matter. You have no information as to the course in which he is interested and you send him the general follow-up letters which show how he can educate himself at home by taking up your work. In two or three weeks he writes that he is especially interested in learning a foreign language. Immediately you cut his name off the general follow-up list and start sending him a series specially written to show how easy it is to master another tongue by your particular methods; then after receiving two or three letters he may write in that he wants to learn Spanish and asks about that course. Immediately you narrow your follow-up and come back with arguments on the advantages of knowing Spanish; you emphasize the opportunities in the southern countries for Americans who can speak Spanish. In a week or two he writes that he would like to take your course if he can get it on monthly payments. Here the follow-up is still further specialized and you start off on another tangent to bring him into line on this point. The possible splits are innumerable. Your problem is to follow each split promptly, logically, fully.

No rules can be laid down, applicable to all businesses, for the specialized follow-up. On some propositions, from the day a prospect replies he must receive individual attention.

Form letters would be disastrous. On other propositions, the follow-up may split so often on the same point that form letters can cover the new angle as effectively as personal letters; more often the paragraph system can be used. An entire form letter would not be applicable but the correspondent can designate paragraphs, covering certain points, that continually come up and these paragraphs can be used over and over again.

Some letter-writers have this system worked out with paragraphs, grouped under subjects. These take up the talking points from so many different angles that by merely noting on a letter certain numbers, a reply can be written from the paragraph book that will be just as truly specialized as if the letter had been dictated and it is a personal letter in that it covers specifically the subjects on which the prospect wants further information.

The first step in giving the inquiry individual treatment is that of separating the inquiries according to some appropriate method of classification. Different businesses group inquiries by interest, location, kind of prospect, or kind of goods.

Classifying inquiries on the degree of interest shown is the best method where a single product is being marketed.

In the "geographical method" inquiries are grouped according to the city, county or state from which they come.

The advantage of this method may be shown by an incident illustrating the folly of using country appeals on city inquiries.

A city newspaper man unexpectedly picked up \$150. He had always wanted a motor boat. Living within a few blocks of the lagoon in a park where hundreds of motor boats are kept docked, had given him the desire—now he had the money. He wrote a hasty line to a leading boat concern. Back came the stereotyped reply, Number one: "As we have no agent in your vicinity, we have decided to make you an agent's proposition and discount." He was not looking for an agent's proposition, and bought his boat elsewhere. A country boy might have jumped at the "no agent in your vicinity" talking point—a *blase* city man is prejudiced against the firm.

This was one place where the boat company lost a hundred-and-fifty-dollar sale—perhaps one of thousands.

Take an automobile selling agency. Geography determines to a considerable extent what arguments to use. The Chicago city man is not going to worry about hills and sand; he has

smooth pavements, and for city runs, sand will not trouble him. The St. Paul man, on the other hand, will want hill climbing ability. Country towns on a sandy prairie call for one class of talking points; a farmer prospect, in a country where gumbo mud is often hub deep, will remain unstirred under the appeals that will sell a New York farmer.

One way of getting individual treatment is classifying inquiries on the kind of prospect. You would not talk the same to a janitor as to a bank president. An employer of labor is reached by an entirely different set of reasoning than an employee. A school teacher buys a set of encyclopedias for one group of reasons; a proof-reader for another. A clerk buys land because he longs to go to farming; a farmer because land values are the only values he feels sure of.

So the time to split a follow-up may be the day the first inquiry comes in. The location of the prospect may give a cue on the arguments most likely to appeal to him; the letterhead may give facts about his business that will permit specialized arguments coupling the product up closely to his own needs.

As a consequence, classification of inquiries on the occupation of the prospect is one of the surest that can be made. There are other classifications—in fact, a canvass of twenty different lines where inquiries are classified on kind of prospect, shows that about half of the businesses stick to the “occupation” classification while others use groupings based on other attributes; as, rating of customer, probable future orders, amount of goods sold last year—this by a stove firm placing considerable stress on amount of sale—general business standing, and the like.

Where a house carries a varied line of goods, classification on the line about which inquiry is made is necessary. Different items call for different talking points. But more than this, the kind of treatment hinges on interest—and what the inquirer asks about is a sure guide to where his interests lie.

Granted that personal attention is necessary when the follow-up splits, the point of application is important. The general rule should be: the more nearly personal the answer the greater the chance of making the sale.

If this personality is spread over a dozen letters, a corresponding efficiency surely follows; if thinned out to cover thousands of forms the dilution of personality gives a similar dilution of selling force.

VARYING The *Appearance* Of Letters In The Follow-up

MOST FOLLOW-UP *writers agree that it is not enough to approach the prospect with new arguments and from different angles. He may toss the letter into the basket unread and so an additional appeal is made to him by changing the stationery. Try-outs have proved that by using different sizes, styles and colors of envelopes and letterheads, a series of letters are MORE WIDELY READ than when the same messages are sent out on one kind of stationery. Putting in unique enclosures, inserting post cards or mailing cards between letters—these and other schemes add to the pulling power of the follow-up and this chapter tells how such schemes are applied by successful correspondents*

ANYTHING that is monotonous tends to put a damper on one's interest in it. The play that packs a theatre every night by its brightness and originality soon palls on the performers. The landscapes which tourists travel many miles to see are seldom appreciated by those who live near them. People are interested in a change; that which is novel attracts solely because it is novel. Styles in dress are kaleidoscopic—it is a trait of human nature to avoid monotony and to seek for change.

So the advertising man and the correspondent seek to create interest by new ideas, new methods of presenting their propositions, new schemes for attracting attention, new hooks for getting the order. Fortunate the man who can write so entertainingly that people will read his letters even though they had

no previous interest in the subject. There are some men who could write an interesting letter on a new subdivision in the middle of Sahara; doubtless they could sell town lots at the North Pole. But most correspondents are not so fortunate. They must resort to schemes for attracting attention and centering interest in their proposition. In the beginning a prospect may know nothing about your goods. Your first letters may arouse a most cursory interest; months later the prospect may become so interested that he will read anything you send him, but it may take a long educational campaign. His budding interest must be nursed along not only by new angles of approach and arguments but by the appeal to the eye that comes from a change in the stationery, a variation in the typographical appearance, the use of novel enclosures or colored post cards and other printed matter.

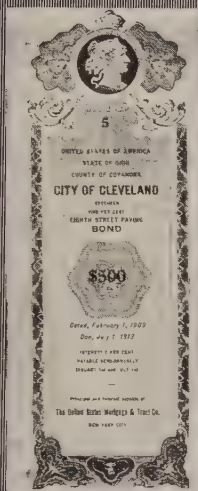
There are some firms that stick religiously to one kind of stationery and do nothing to vary the physical appearance of their correspondence. "You want to write such good letters," they argue, "that people will always take time to read them."

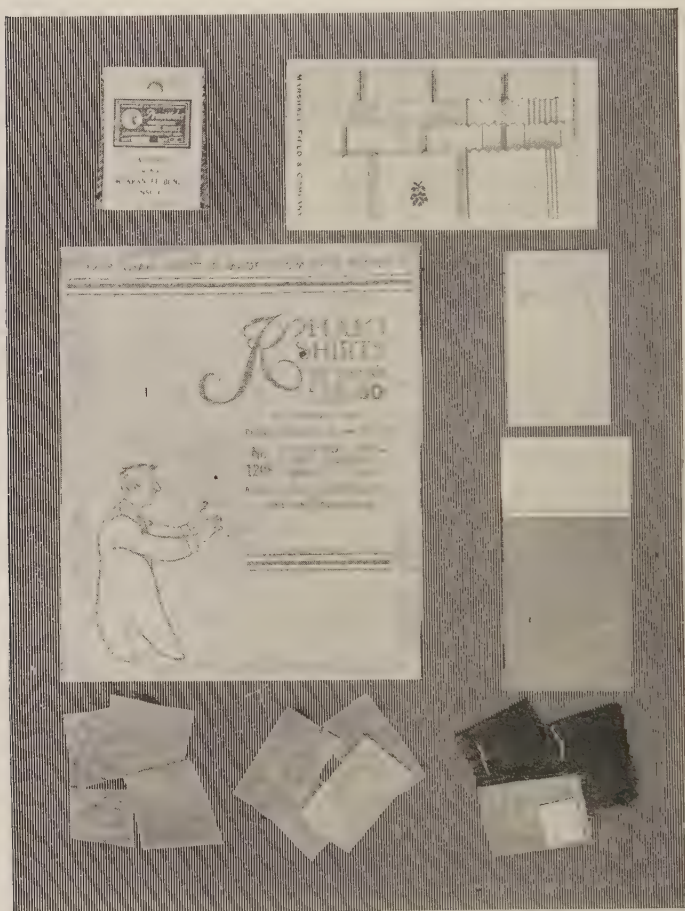
"Might as well advise a publisher," comes the reply, "to make his magazine so interesting that it would not need illustrations and an artistic cover."

The magazine *can* be made interesting without pictures; it *can* be made to sell with the plainest of covers but the magazines that have the largest circulation and attract the most attention, employ the finest artists and spend thousands of dollars for startling cover designs. It is a never-ceasing search for novel ideas and schemes for making an appeal to the public.

So changes in appearance of the follow-up and unique enclosures are used, not to take the place of the strong, well-written letter, but to reinforce it, assure a wider reading, and concentrate attention on its message.

The most familiar scheme is to use different styles of paper and envelopes. If a person receives half a dozen letters from a concern and finds nothing to interest him especially, the chances are the next in the series will go to the wastebasket unopened. But if the next one comes in a different dress it is more than likely the recipient will open the envelope and at least glance at the opening paragraph—it may approach him from some angle that will catch his attention and some new argument may carry him along and develop his interest. if a sale results it can not be credited to the different sta-





Neither printed descriptions nor pictures are as effective as actual samples of the product advertised. Here are shown different methods of sending samples of dress goods, shirtings, and cloth for other purposes. At the right are some pieces of wool showing different varnishes and wall decorations, and at the bottom are veneers that show different furniture finishes; the various colored pieces of leather are likewise used by furniture houses in showing the styles of upholstering.

tionery, but the stationery helped; it made a momentary point of contact, long enough to transmit a current that electrified the reader's interest and led him on to consider the proposition.

Some concerns use two styles of letterheads; one containing nothing more than the name and address neatly printed in the corner; the other, intended to impress the distant prospect with the size of the firm, shows a bird's-eye view of the plant at the top of the page, together with the names of officers, list of branch houses and possibly other data concerning the capacity of the institution, its shipping facilities, and so forth. It is the practice of some firms using the two kinds of letterheads to alternate, writing to a man first on one and then on the other. Two colors of paper are used for the carbon copies so the stenographer can tell which letterhead was last used.

Possibly a more familiar scheme is to provide different styles of stationery for different departments and in a follow-up campaign send out the letters from the various departments. Thus one letter would go out over the personal signature of the "General Sales Manager," another would bear the name of the president, and so on, each one using a distinctive line of stationery.

One firm, manufacturing display fixtures for merchants, has some thirty different letterheads. The printed matter is the same on all but in the upper left hand corner of each is a large halftone showing some use to which the fixture may be put. Every letter that a merchant receives brings forcibly to his attention some specific method of using the fixture.

The same idea is carried out by a large concern in New York manufacturing electric signs. In the course of the year it gets out a dozen or more letterheads, each bearing a halftone illustration of a new sign that the company has erected. The color of the stationery is also changed and the company is convinced that this has proved its most effective advertising.

An eastern firm selling ladies' suits and cloaks by mail, follows the latest styles in stationery and if the styles do not change often enough to suit the requirements of the manager, he finds variety by using different tints of paper. The stationery is always of good quality and in the best of taste. The return card is printed on the reverse flap and there is a "social tone" about its letters that assures their being read.

A Baltimore firm doing a large business by mail has three styles of letterheads. Its follow-up consists of six letters—two

are sent out on each style of paper. The first and second letters go out on an engraved letterhead giving the name of officers and location of branch offices. The second style is a lithographed heading with a large view of the plant and considerable information concerning the company's products; the third design is embossed and contains nothing more than the name, address and words "Executive Office."

A St. Louis firm uses the same printed matter on all its letterheads—a trade mark, name and address. Its variation comes entirely in different kinds and colors of paper—flats, bonds, linens and linen-finish bonds, in innumerable shades.

Sometimes correspondents resort to freakish effects that "fall down" because attention is attracted to the paper in such a striking way that the reader forgets all about the proposition. This is the effect on a reader receiving a letter on a sheet of ordinary manila wrapping paper. A letter on a sheet of "onion skin" proved a curiosity—every one in the office where it was received felt of it and made some remark about the paper, but no one read the letter. Eccentricity has no place in business. The salesman who is so foppishly dressed that one cannot help thinking about his appearance takes few orders.

A letter from a moving-picture house on very dark paper with a white space in the center representing the screen, on which the letter-message is shown, was also passed around the office but every one read the letter and commented on the clever idea because it coupled up the reader's interest in the proposition.

One of the most familiar methods of varying the stationery is to switch from the regular letterhead and the familiar six and three-quarter envelopes to the double note size and the baronial envelope. A paper house using nothing but its monogram, prints it in black on the noteheads and in red on the letterheads and produces a very striking effect.

A large electric light company has developed a great publicity feature from its stationery. Arc lights for store illumination are shown on the letters that go to merchants. Uses of electricity in the home are illustrated in the letters going to housewives; manufacturers receive letters from the "Private Plant Department" and a score of different outlets for electric light or power has been developed in this way.

There is almost as great a variation in envelopes as in letterheads. Many concerns strive to relieve the monotony by unique

designs, at the same time making sure of an advertising service. One successful house uses four different styles of envelopes: the regular size with return card in the corner; the baronial with card on reverse flat; the window envelope and a plain envelope.

Firms sending out periodic announcements do not find it so necessary to resort to attention-getting schemes. For instance, a store that issues a monthly bargain bulletin or sends out a notice of special sales can feel reasonably certain that the women will read its letters or circulars although always mailed in the same kind of envelope.

Lighting companies, telephone companies and other concerns that send out bills or statements every month are usually careful to see that letters or circular advertising matter are mailed in envelopes conspicuously different from the envelopes used for the statements. A western banker applies the same idea in using a distinctive stationery for advertising matter.

"We have found," he explains, "that there comes something of a mental shock to the average man when he gets a letter from a bank; he wonders if a check he has deposited has been returned, whether he has overdrawn his account, whether some one has defaulted on a note he has signed, or if an account has been sent to the bank to collect. There are lots of disagreeable things that might be in that letter, and so we relieve his mind quickly by printing in large type '*Put your Money in Farm Mortgages*' or, '*3 per cent Interest paid on Savings Accounts*,' or something of that kind, on the envelope."

None of these points are too insignificant to the correspondent who studies the prospect or customer—who understands what "psychology" means when applied to business.

The use of enclosures is almost equal in importance to the stationery. Here is opportunity for infinite variety—order blanks return envelopes, return post cards, stuffers, circulars, folders testimonials, price lists, samples, coupons or certificates, souvenirs—the possibilities are unlimited. What to enclose and the order of sending out different kinds of advertising matter depends on the proposition. There are no general principles, except to avoid sending the same kind of enclosures repeatedly. There may be two exceptions—the order blank and the return envelope. Advertising men of wide experience nearly all agree that no letter relating to a selling proposition should be mailed without an order blank accompanying it, as one never knows

just when the prospect may be in the mood for buying, and facilities for ordering should always be at hand.

The third variation possible in the follow-up campaign is to use colored mailing cards or something entirely distinct from letters to break the monotony of the correspondence and to approach the prospect from a different angle. Land companies and promoters of mines, and various industries, frequently sandwich between letters a newspaper or magazine containing a write-up of their proposition. Facsimile testimonial letters are sent and lists of buyers are looked upon as "good copy." Where the proposition justifies it, a telegram or night lettergram is sometimes used to close up a deal. Colored mailing cards are widely used and with good results, for they usually are artistically gotten out, the messages short and to the point.

While the follow-up permits of an infinite variety of appeals and arrangements, each concern must work out its own line of operation, but the actual methods of one successful firm may be suggestive. This concern sells cream separators by mail.

When an inquiry comes in, a catalogue is sent, accompanied by a four-page letter which bears down on the price of the separator and the saving it will mean to the farmer to buy direct.

The next approach is a post card showing the simple mechanism of the machine; next a letter is sent emphasizing some improved attachment; then follow two mailing cards, each giving a testimonial and pointing out one reason why this separator is as good as higher-priced machines. Then a letter goes out over the signature of the president telling how he has used the separator on his own farm. He writes in a man-to-man, farmer-to-farmer attitude and urges the recipient to send direct to him for further information on any point that is not perfectly clear. If this letter does not bring forth a response, the name is taken from the list of prospects and placed in the "dead" file.

The mailings are four days apart; each mailing takes up one distinct selling point but all drive home the one idea of "satisfaction." There is no monotony in this campaign; there is no wasted postage and the business has been developed rapidly.

Vary the stationery, approach the prospect through different mediums, present your arguments in different clothes but keep his interest centered in your proposition and do not let it scatter because of eccentricities and far-fetched schemes that do not apply to it.

Scraping BARNACLES Off The Mailing List

NO MATTER how strong your letters may be, how convincing your arguments or how attractive your offers, the whole campaign will prove a failure if it is not directed at LIVE PROSPECTS. Every "dead" name that is carried on your list adds to the selling expense of those who buy. Correspondents too often center all their thought on the PRESENTATION of a PROPOSITION and, while watching closely the cost of preparing and mailing their letters and advertising matter, overlook entirely the DEAD WEIGHT on the MAILING LIST that IMPEDES the CAMPAIGN. This chapter takes up specific schemes that have been used for bringing the mailing list into drydock and SCRAPING off the BARNACLES

AN organization employing about one hundred and fifty men in the office submitted its follow-up list to each one with the request that he go over it and take out any that might be tagged, "Not in the market," "No longer interested," "Moved,"—names that should be taken from the active file.

Nearly every man in the office, it was found, was able to "spot" one to a dozen names, either duplicates, or "out of the market." Remaining employees recognized nearly as many more names, which it was time and money wasted to circularize. This made a substantial yearly saving, besides calling forth several profitable suggestions.

The average mailing list becomes fouled rapidly with names of former prospects who have died, moved away, bought, gone out of business or for other reasons are no longer in the market and so the wise manager has his list taken into drydock periodically and the barnacles scraped off. A single mailing to a "dead" prospect means only three or four cents, but in a large list which is covered several times a year the drain is too great to be overlooked by the progressive manager.

Particularly on short time propositions—as those in which development plans mature rapidly—it is necessary to cut the prospect off the list, because the proposition is constantly changing.

When the prospect does not reply to any of the follow-ups, one of the following plans may be carried out:

1. Simply drop the prospect who has paid no attention.
2. Ask him for information as to how the proposition has appealed to him.
3. Switch him onto some other plan or proposition the company is putting out.

The disadvantage of cutting the prospect off the list—abandoning further work on him—is that he may be considering the proposition, and may have made up his mind to order at some future time.

Follow-up writers are strongly interested in knowing exactly how the proposition has appealed to the prospect. His sharp eyes may have seen some flaw in the presentation of the proposition that has not occurred to any one else. He may be a very valuable man along that line; may possess information that he is perfectly willing to give and which is very valuable to the follow-up writer. In one case, at least, it was found that a customer who sent for a catalogue of an orange orchard out of curiosity, was a walking encyclopedia on the subject of oranges and orange-culture. An interview was arranged and the entire follow-up literature was changed on the gratuitous advice of what correspondents call a "rubber neck" inquirer. But more than this, if by any means the regular prospect can be induced to reply to any kind of a letter, he is then more in the mood to order. This is guarded as one of the choicest secrets of a successful promoter who, aside from his regular follow-ups, writes various letters asking information, or otherwise calling for an answer. Those who do not answer are considered "sure-enough" barnacles and are dropped from the list.

An instalment mail-order house finds it pays to cooperate with justices of the peace in clearing up its lists. These men, it has been found, make unusually good collectors and incidentally are available to check over lists of local prospects. The letter sent to a justice reads:

Dear Judge:

As you know, we have a large number of collections, these being handled where possible by justices of the peace. As a result, we feel that you will be interested in the enclosed list of names of your neighbors whom we are writing from time to time for business.

It will take but a moment for you to glance over these names and place check marks opposite the names which can be called "live"--that is, having the right address and which are probably "in the market." We have left a blank opposite each name so that you may set down any suggestions or corrections you may have to make regarding other names.

We will reciprocate by sending our collections your way in the future, or, if you prefer, will pay you for your time.

Very sincerely yours,

Adams & Adams

Other modifications of this plan are to get lawyers to cooperate—a plan only moderately successful. Sending a registered letter to the postmaster in small towns and the "chief carriers" in carrier towns, offering a cent a name to a bright boy for checking up the list sent him, or writing to the assistant cashier of a bank, enclosing a small draft in payment for services, are schemes that usually work out all right.

This same idea, applied in a different way, is used by a large wall paper house having an annual business running well up into the millions, conducted entirely through local representatives who sell from specimen books. A new correspondent coming to the house was convinced that the mailing list was weighted down with barnacles, and sent a letter to the local express agent in every town where the company had representatives.

In this letter emphasis was put upon the fact that the expressman received a commission on all the business that went

through his office and so it was to his advantage to help the house to get in touch with live prospects who would buy paper that is sent by express. He was then asked to look over the accompanying list and scratch off the names of former salesmen who were no longer in town or who for any reason might not be interested. The suggestion was also made that the company would be very glad to have the agent add the names of any persons who might prove acceptable salesmen.

The correspondent found that the company had been carrying on its list over 21,000 barnacles—names of former customers, who had died, moved away or gone into other lines of business. From the same letter the company received the names of over 40,000 possible customers, many of whom became good salesmen.

A short "cut off" letter which not only produced results, but cleared up the list as well, was used by an orange orchard company. It read:

Dear Mr. Phillips:

I have looked up your letter of inquiry about "Rancho Orchards," also copies of my replies to you. I have sent you our booklet, and have written you several times regarding our five-acre orange and fig groves, but have had no response to my letters.

We do not wish to burden you with literature if you are not interested, and shall consider it a favor if you will tell me why our proposition does not appeal to you.

Would you prefer a ten-acre tract of undeveloped land close to the orchards?

Are you interested in Rancho as a home or an investment?

I shall appreciate your reply. You are invited to use this sheet and the self addressed stamped envelope in answering, if you will be so kind.

Very truly yours,

By *Edward Binow*

Vice-President,

THE BAYS LAND COMPANY.

A St. Louis firm selling high grade bonds has found it necessary to revise its list every six months or a year. Bond offerings

accompanied by circular letters, are sent to all inquirers for a period of six months, or, where correspondence is favorable, for a year. At the end of that time a return postal is sent, asking the recipient if he wants to be kept on the mailing list.

This method is applicable to bond buyers, as they are for the most part business men and women and give a prompt reply to a postal of this kind. This plan has been tried in other lines and it has been found, as a general thing, to secure the best results from two classes of people—business men and farmers. It has been found that they respond readily to a request to have their names taken off the list.

A plan for determining the “liveness” of a list is that of making such an attractive offer—aside from the main offer—that the live ones will answer. Sometimes a book, picture or premium is offered in return for a reply card request. In other cases a small price is charged—a “two-cent stamp” to shut out mere curiosity seekers—or “twenty-five cents for a dollar book,” or article. On an English book list over sixty per cent responded when a pamphlet was offered for two pence—about five cents. This gave an opportunity, not only to determine the “live ones,” but to correct up names and addresses preliminary to a larger campaign.

A department store manager who puts out a catalogue every six months, is educating his customers to “register” every year or at least every two years. He starts his campaign for a list with a letter, “Register for the big book.” This letter goes out six weeks before the catalogue is ready. Those not registering are circularized until about ninety per cent finally answer. This, together with inquiries, gives a live list, assuring small postage and catalogue loss.

A corset company doing a large mail-order business, found it desirable to lighten the mailing list of unlikely prospects and a letter was sent out to all the doubtful customers, asking for particulars regarding their corset department, how much space it occupied, how many people it employed and what lines it found to be the best sellers. The information, the letter stated, was for certain statistical data that was being compiled.

This was a subtle scheme, for, while only a few merchants who had corset departments took the trouble to give the information desired, in nearly every case merchants who did not handle corsets or who were out of business, wrote in and explained why

the letter did not apply to them. In this way, the correspondence department was able to scrape off the barnacles, keeping on its mailing list only those who were known prospects.

One correspondent with a wholesale dry goods house had the girls compile a list of all former customers from whom nothing had been heard for several years, in order to ascertain how many of them were still in business. Then he had some personal letterheads and envelopes printed on the finest grade of bond paper. He wrote to the merchants that he was getting out a list of the dry goods houses in the different states. Would the recipient be willing to cooperate with him by giving him certain facts regarding the length of time he had been in business and the names and addresses of other dry goods merchants in his own town?

Here, again, the merchants who were in business did not all respond, by any means. But in almost every case where a man had gone out of business he replied, or in the case of men who had died, relatives who received his mail replied, stating the facts; in case of removal, letters were invariably forwarded or returned by the postmaster. The high grade of stationery used and the absence of advertising ear-marks seemed to demand prompt attention and the replies enabled the correspondent to rid the list of thousands of names of men who, for one reason or another, were no longer prospects.

Finally, what to do with culled names, is a question that bothers. Some firms make a practice of trading "culls" with businesses in somewhat the same line yet not in direct competition. These names are then tried out on a single letter proposition or are written a letter asking if they are interested. A firm employing agents has secured several hundred good representatives from the culls from the customer lists of other houses.

In general, it is best to abandon the "dead list." There are enough live prospects—concentrate on these.

MISTAKES To *Avoid* In The Follow-Up

THE FOLLOW-UP *is one of the most useful tools in modern business—but it is not an AUTOMATIC TOOL. Properly directed it will perform an infinite number of services—find customers, sell goods and extend a business indefinitely; carelessly handled, it will leave in its wake prospects whose interest has waned, customers whose trade has been lost, bills that can never be collected, opportunities that cannot be regained. From the conception of the letter to the addressing of the envelope that carries it, there are innumerable opportunities for errors, anyone of which will spell failure. What the most common MISTAKES are and HOW they can be GUARDED AGAINST are considered in this chapter*

ONE of the surprising things proved by our system of try-outs," says a leading mail-order merchandiser, "is the fact that a letter put out to *get* business may actually *lose* business. It may not only cost money to mail but a carelessly written letter put out in a slipshod manner has cost us several thousand dollars in actual business besides the indirect loss which could not even be estimated.

"On one occasion, a letter went out containing some most undiplomatic statements touching the percentage of profit made by dealers. This might have passed unnoticed but the mailer, through error, sent it to our dealers' list made up of about six thousand dealers who buy of us, despite the fact that we are a

mail-order house. "The error was discovered after some four thousand letters had been mailed but not in time to stop a loss of over \$4,000 in business from cancellation of orders alone."

While the results of error in the follow-up are not usually so disastrous or so immediate, yet the danger is there and must be systematically guarded against by the careful user of the follow-up in business-getting.

"What is the greatest fault in the follow-up?" The question was put to the head correspondent of a large mail-order house.

"Mediocrity!" The answer was made without hesitation. Mediocrity is a serious fault, but it is not confined to the follow-up; it is the weakness of all business correspondence. But mediocrity shows in a follow-up more fatally than in the initial letter. The writer may be original and forceful on the start but he can not keep it up, and the follow-up tapers down into anti-climax. It is hard to write one strong, original letter—it is infinitely harder to write a series of strong, original letters.

Mediocrity and generality are faults rather than mistakes, but they lead to the needless waste of hundreds of thousands of dollars annually.

Another thing that weighs down the promising follow-up is what may be called "machineness." By machineness is meant that set of characteristics usually associated with work handled in large quantities by machines, as opposed to work done by hand.

The manager of the mail-order department of a New York department store, who formerly wrote human interest follow-ups for a Chicago mail-order house, says:

"It is only necessary to consider how the ordinary follow-up, particularly in a big institution, is gotten up, to see why it often does not pull effectually.

"Ten to one, beginning with the writer, it is a machine proposition; it is his work to turn out so many forms that his superior will pass. There are any number of men who can write a good sales letter in reply to an inquiry and follow up the individual in an effective way but when they start to write form letters the human element is lacking—they are not directed at an individual and the arguments are scattering.

"Coming to the mechanical process of putting out the letter, it is printed by machine work, addressed, folded and stamped by machinery, and goes out bearing the impress of machine work that is unmistakable and ineffective."

ERRORS TO AVOID IN FOLLOW-UP

GENERAL MISTAKES	MEDIOCRITY MACHINENESS
SUBJECT MATTER	UNINTERESTING IRRELEVANT OFFENSIVE ANTAGONISTIC
ARRANGEMENT	MISPLACING POINTS IN LETTER MISPLACING LETTERS IN SERIES DANGER OF ANTI-CLIMAX
PRESENTATION OR STYLE	WRONG ATTITUDE FAMILIARITY BEGGING INSULTING SCARING WRONG VIEWPOINT LACK OF FORCE LACK OF CLEARNESS ATTEMPT AT HUMOR EXAGGERATION
MISUSE OF LISTS	USING "WORN-OUT" LISTS USING BLANKET LETTER TO ALL CLASSES USING UNRELIABLE LISTS DANGER OF DUPLICATING NAMES FAILING TO CUT OFF NAMES AFTER INQUIRY OR ORDER
MISTAKES IN MAILING	SENDING WRONG LETTER SENDING LETTERS OUT OF ORDER CARELESSNESS IN FILLING-IN IN FOLDING IN SEALING IN STAMPING IN ADDRESS-ING SOLICITING CUSTOMERS MAKING BETTER OFFER TO PURCHASERS SENDING FORM LETTER TO AC-QUAINTANCES MISUSE OF ENCLOSURES OMITTING ENCLOSURES SENDING WRONG ENCLOSURES
DUPLICATING PROCESSES	FAULTY IMPRESSION OFF-SET OVER OR UNDER INKING POORLY MATCHED COLORS
ILL-TIMED LETTERS	MAIL THAT REACHES PROSPECT AT BUSIEST TIME PROPOSITIONS PRESENTED OUT OF SEASON MAILING LETTERS SO LATE THAT PROPOSITION COULD NOT BE ACCEPTED IN TIME FIXED
MISCELLANEOUS ERRORS	GENERAL UNTRUTHFUL STATEMENTS DELAY IN ANSWERING SPECIFIC ABSENCE OF DATE INAPPROPRIATE SALUTATION INAPPROPRIATE SUPERSCRPTION OMISSION OF SIGNATURE

That loss from machine work is easily demonstrated; go over an unresponsive list with a human interest letter handled with personal care and the results show at once that when some real interest replaces mere mechanical handling the results are sure and immediate.

One instance of many will show this. Eighteen thousand form letters were put out by a mail-order house at a time when sales were at the lowest ebb during the year. The results on this occasion hardly paid for the stamps. Then a conference was called and the situation was gone into thoroughly. It was decided that each man at the meeting—fifteen in all—should put out a special letter according to his own ideas; write it, see it printed and mailed and "nurse" it so as to make it as different from the traditional "machine" form as possible.

The results were that twelve out of the fifteen sets pulled an average of thirty-one per cent against a former average of four per cent. Here was a gain of more than twenty-seven per cent made by getting away from machine methods.

One of the methods of getting away from "machineness" was tried by a form letter writer for an instalment house. Taking an issue of 5,000 forms, he signed 2,500 of them individually. Next he had the files brought to him for information, and guided by the previous correspondence, he added a personal note, in his own handwriting as a postscript. This means of getting away from the machineness of output resulted in sales aggregating \$2,144 from letters so treated to \$386 pulled by an equal of number mechanically signed letters on a similar list.

Again: a bank one year put out a form letter during the holiday period bearing a postscript in imitation handwriting, "Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." The signature of the cashier, also in imitation handwriting followed. Later the president had each employee write a personal letter to a list of business acquaintances. The first letter went to 11,000 names; the second to 800 names, yet the second proved three times as valuable as the first.

There is no greater mistake than to put out a follow-up and expect it to pull simply because it is a follow-up. Unless it is applied intelligently it will prove a failure and a costly failure.

Carelessness is the cardinal sin of follow-ups and is inexcusable because it can be traced down to individual cases. Carelessness—mere lack of close attention—can kill a follow-up

at any stage. From the time a letter is written until it reaches the prospect, any one of a hundred variations of carelessness may kill it.

Carelessness on the part of employees writing and putting out follow-ups is of such importance to a concern using half a million letters yearly, that a checking system has been introduced to bring to light errors from inside the establishment.

For every thousand names on the lists, ten are for checking purposes. Recipients of these letters look them over carefully, make any suggestions that may be of value and remail them with the follow-up, enclosures and envelope—the latter showing cancellation postmark and backstamp—to the residence address of the general manager. Those who have charge of the follow-ups know about the system but do not know which names are on for checking-up purposes. The system not only inspires greater care in the work of every employee but checks absolutely the more common mechanical errors, as in folding, sealing, stamping, use of right enclosures and similar faults.

In one case, a partial issue of 6,000 letters was sent out with a wrong enclosure. Without some such system this piece of carelessness never would have been known. To correct it a follow-up was sent out explaining the error and this letter proved to be a good puller.

The errors that actually happen every day are too varied to permit complete classification. There are certain errors, however, that may be grouped and reference to them in this connection may help in guarding against their occurrence.

In the first place, may be mentioned errors in subject matter. A blunder of this kind is frequently made when an inquiry comes in on some particular point and the regular form letter is sent in reply—a letter that does not deal with the particular phase of the subject in which the prospect is interested. Under this head may be grouped the letters that give offense or arouse antagonism. A Chicago man received a letter from a New York clothing manufacturer beginning:

"It is just as easy and economical for you to wear clothes that are made in New York--America's Style Center--clothes that set, not mock, fashions, as it is for you to wear the other kind."

Here was a slap at the man's local pride. It was an attitude to arouse resentment. The very reference that might have helped a sale to someone living in or near New York gives offense to the man in a distant city.

There is no more inexcusable blunder than to abuse a man because he does not respond to your letters, even though he may have answered your advertisement. There are a thousand and ten good reasons why he might not reply. Supposing a man who is away or sick or is temporarily tied up in some big business deal, but is still interested in your proposition, receives such a letter as this:

"All kinds of ne'er-do-wells bob up in reply to advertisements, and our system of stating this money-making proposition in cold type at the start-off was adopted as a means of weeding out the dead ones.

"We knew the dead ones wouldn't 'come back.'

"You haven't.

"But it doesn't necessarily follow that you are a dead one. If the dead ones don't 'come back,' it doesn't mean that all who don't come back are dead ones. Get that?

"Anyway, we are prodding you with this letter to see if there really is any life in you."

Could you imagine a letter more deadly to prospects?

Another error in the subject matter is calling attention to the fact that no response has been given to previous letters. While this is done sometimes by the most successful writers it usually strikes a wrong chord to remind a man that he has already turned a proposition down several times. Here is the opening paragraph of the second letter in a follow-up:

"We beg to inquire if you received our reply and circular matter sent to you two weeks ago in response to an inquiry received from you. Fearing that possibly you didn't, or that you hastily mislaid it, we attach herewith a duplicate of same and ask that you carefully peruse its contents."

No special attempt was made to disguise this as a form letter yet it was a "give away," as a printed form calls attention to the fact that many prospects are not interested in the proposition.

The letter that starts out "You have not answered any of the four letters we have written you" is equally unfortunate because it emphasizes the previous lack of interest—a hard way to develop present interest.

Then there are errors in arrangement which have to do not with the subject matter, but the placing of these subjects in the series so they will be most effective, as brought out in the chapters on arguments and offers. Anti-climax is one of the commonest and most fatal defects in many campaigns.

Akin to the errors of subject matter are the errors in presentation or style. Violation of any or all of the laws of clearness, force, and ease; attempted "ginger style" which falls flat; heavy, wordy, uninteresting style; presentation from the seller's viewpoint; coldness or preciseness of diction; over-familiarity; attempts at humor; unbacked statements; anecdotes or testimonials, obviously not genuine or exaggerated or distorted for selling purposes; petulance, implication of obligation or unfairness in not replying; begging or asking sympathy; "throwing the scare;" appealing to prejudice; over-use of either persuasion or conviction; general exaggeration—all are disastrous.

A man wrote to one of the largest manufacturers of ready-made clothing in the country and received this answer:

Dear Sir:

We do not make riding breeches.

Very truly,

THE CENTRAL TAILORS.

There can be no excuse for such a curt reply. The firm is a national advertiser spending hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to secure new customers yet it failed to show common courtesy to one who inquired for something out of its line. A simple expression of regret or giving the address of some firm that could supply the writer's needs, would have won a friend instead of offending a prospect.

Errors in the use of lists drain many a campaign appropriation—using either a list primarily unsuitable for the proposition

or one "worn out;" using a list which has been swindled or otherwise "cleaned up" by some fake proposition; sending blanket letters to all classes; failing to cut the prospect's name off the follow-up list when he has inquired or ordered or has an account in the process of collection.

Few things are more exasperating to a customer who has ordered than to have his name left on the mailing list and—as too often happens—to be offered a lower price than he has paid.

The errors that occur in mailing are legion—sending the wrong letter, as a collection letter for a sales letter; wrong serial number, or duplicate of letter already sent; "Dear Sir" letters sent to women; sending "special offers" that intercept orders forwarded at a higher rate; sending soliciting letters asking business direct in agency territory; soliciting an agent as a customer; sending form letters signed by printed signature to personal friends, and so forth.

A ranchman owning an automobile wrote to a supply dealer for a catalogue as he was so far from any city that he intended to carry some extra parts and accessories in order to make his own repairs. Back came the regular form letter urging him to put in a large stock of goods. It told of the large profits that he could make by "supplying the trade" of his territory—there were not three machines within a thousand miles.

A man living in a suburban town near Chicago answered the advertisement of an eastern manufacturer. Ten days later he received the sample asked for and a proposition to make him "county representative." A glance at the map would have shown that the inquirer lived in Cook county. The careless use of a printed form might have lost the company the right to put its own organization into Chicago with its almost unlimited possibilities for this particular product.

A New York investment company replied to inquiries on railroad stationery. The letters written in longhand were mailed at Cleveland and bore the signature of the president of the company. The opening paragraph read:

"Your letter reached my desk just as I was leaving on the Twentieth Century Limited for Chicago. I wanted to write to you myself but did not have time to dictate a reply and so I am writing this on the train."

Here was a clever idea to impress the recipient with the personal interest taken in him but careless mailing spoiled it—at least one prospect got three copies of the same letter mailed on three successive days.

A government employee stationed in the heart of the Philippines, thinking of the time when he would return to the states, wrote to a correspondence school regarding its course on "How to Sell Real Estate." The third letter in the follow-up reached him before the second and conveyed this surprising information:

"If you will enroll at once, we can help you make money right away. Upon receipt of your application we will send you a list of property that we have for sale in your immediate vicinity, together with the names of probable buyers who live near you so you can get to work and put through some sales this very month."

Every business man has met with similar blunders without number—monuments to the stupidity of the office boy, or, more correctly speaking, to the department head who entrusts such important matters to incompetent employees.

Errors of time should not be overlooked. No experienced mail-order man will send out a mailing to reach prospects the first of the week or the first of the month when the recipients are most likely to be busy. Some of the bigger blunders are entirely inexcusable, such as sending out advertising matter on corn harvesters late in November. One letter started out:

"Now that the holiday rush is over, you will doubtless have time for other things."

The letter was dated April 22. High time for the holiday rush to be over in most places!

A New York trade journal, a publication devoting a great deal of space to criticising advertising campaigns, made an effort to secure a large number of advertisers for a special

September issue. This was the closing paragraph of a strong two-page letter.

"To be sure of catching the issue, your copy should reach us by AUGUST 28th. Better mail it today."

These letters were mailed on August 25th to prospects in Omaha and Kansas City and other distant cities. The letters were entirely wasted; to comply would have been a physical impossibility.

There can be no greater mistake than downright falsifying in the follow-up. Everyone makes allowances for a certain amount of exaggeration in advertising but a palpable untruth is always reactionary. A man who was visiting in Kansas answered the advertisement of a motor boat manufacturer. He intended to investigate different boats and buy one for a summer home in Wisconsin. There was no possible use for one in central Kansas, yet the second follow-up read:

"We mailed you our proposition and agent's contract on April 21st. We should very much like to know what you are going to do in the matter as we have others waiting in your county to take up this proposition."

One man of wide experience insists that the most prevalent mistake in the follow-up is the delay in answering inquiries, a fault in which the largest concerns are frequently the worst offenders.

Mrs. Smith reads of some new food product. It appeals to her and she writes for a booklet—two or three weeks later it comes. The spell of the advertisement has been broken. Or she reads the advertisement from some children's outfitter and writes for a catalogue. In one case it was just five weeks before the catalogue reached the inquirer—the lady had long before purchased something else. An attorney hunted half an hour for some papers, then, remembering the advertisement of a certain filing system that would enable him to find such documents in a few minutes, he wrote for a price list. It was just twenty-one days before the concern—another national advertiser—complied. By that time he had forgotten the urgent need of the filing

system and the catalogue was tossed into the discard. Thousands of sales are lost daily because advertisers do not comply promptly—while the interest of the prospect is at its highest point.

Carelessness in filling-in a form letter sends thousands every morning to the waste basket unread. An enumeration of the more common errors should be sufficient to put the ambitious correspondent on the alert to prevent their recurrence:

Absence of date; misdating; inverted figures or use of a poorly-inked rubber stamp for dating purposes.

Inside address failing to match body of letter either because of different colored ribbon or careless placing in the typewriter.

Salutation, for any reason not appropriate for the one addressed, as unwarranted familiarity, failure to give title or other distinguishing characteristic.

Body of letter, wrongly placed on page or pages, particularly crowding too much matter on page; double spacing when single spacing would appear better or save a page; irregular indentation of paragraphs or first line of paragraphs too deeply indented; turning short line at top of new page.

Complimentary close for any reason not appropriate to body of letter or salutation.

Signature: illegible, where handwritten or reproduced from handwriting; obviously an imitation, when duplicated; omission of pen-written signature when rubber stamp with "Per—" or "By—" is used.

Wrong enclosure or enclosures; enclosures referred to in letter not enclosed; enclosures too bulky for the envelope.

Folding bottom edge so as to line precisely with top; misfolding; folding so as to crowd envelope.

So-called "water sealing" which does not stand handling; sealing which attaches flap of envelope to letter.

Use of one-cent for two-cent postage; stamp partially attached or out of place; under-stamping for weight.

Such are the errors resulting for the most part, from carelessness. Where any of these are present in the follow-up the pulling power may be lowered nearly, if not quite, to zero.

Probably the most practical plan for reducing errors in the follow-up is that of having test names on the list, for this system not only brings to light errors that might not otherwise be detected, but it has a moral effect on the correspondence department that makes for efficiency.

How To COMPILE Lists of PROSPECTS

THE NUCLEUS of the sales system of practically every business house lies in a number of cards filed and automatically locked in cabinets and known as the "MAILING LIST." On these cards are recorded the names and addresses and other information concerning the firm's present and prospective customers. To these lists are sent letters soliciting trade, announcements of sales and other communications that aim to effect sales. Upon the compilation of these lists depends, in a large measure, the sales of the house. This chapter tells how to compile them

THE mailing list, unless properly compiled and handled, is a complicated, costly piece of advertising apparatus.

It is a detail on which much money can be spent; the one subject to most changes, and the one that may develop the most expensive leaks. And all of this is largely due to the fact that business men do not understand and appreciate what a mailing list is for. Nor do they fully understand how mailing lists are compiled and handled.

The mailing list as it is understood in business is for one purpose: to get orders. This may be accomplished directly by letters and circulars sent to names on the mailing list, or indirectly by letters and circulars backing up salesmen or dealers. Practically every line of business can use letters profitably in either this direct or indirect manner.

The mail-order man who is selling direct to the consumer must have a list of probable purchasers of his goods. The mail-order man who is selling direct to retailers must have a list of dealers in his line. The manufacturer or wholesaler who is doing a partial mail-order business must have a list of prospects and customers who do not buy from his salesmen. The manufacturer or wholesaler who is selling directly through salesmen and dealers but who is assisting them with letters must have a mailing list of dealers and a mailing list of their customers. The retailer who sells in a limited trade zone must have a mailing list if he wants to drum up city and country business with letters.

And so on through the cycle of trade, mail-order man, manufacturer, wholesaler and retailer of goods or services—all lines of business can make good use of mailing lists of prospects and customers.

The customers' list is easily secured in a house doing a credit business, because the ledgers show the names and addresses. Cash customers are not so easily secured, but the names and addresses of these patrons can usually be secured from cash sale slips, C. O. D. tickets, the invoices or orders to the alteration department. If these sources will not give you the names of your customers, then other fountain heads must be tapped.

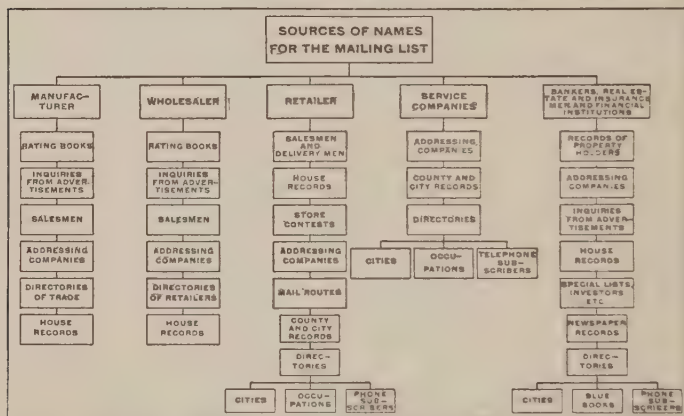
The compiling of a list of prospective customers in any business is not a difficult proposition. Every business man is making something, wholesaling it to the retailer, or retailing it to the consumer. Or, the business may be small enough or the conditions may be such that it successfully performs all of these selling operations. The nature of every business and trade limit its possible patronage to a definite class of buyers. These alone should be reached—one need not be concerned with the methods used by a business which appeals to another group of buyers, unless they are suggestive of a plan which can be transplanted.

In general there are five sources of information compiling of lists of prospects, and the business man emphasizes the importance of these as they best fit his needs. The five general sources are:

- Rating books
- Directories
- Solicitation and house records
- Inquiries from advertisements
- Special methods

The rating books are the court of first resort for manufacturers, wholesalers and jobbers selling to the listed trades. The mercantile agencies keep them thoroughly revised, and the list made up from one of these books is as accurate as it is possible to make in starting out.

Aside from the reliability of names taken from rating books an additional advantage lies in the fact that the list can be made up alphabetically by states and towns and can be confined to any desired territory. A third advantage of a list secured from



There are many sources of names and addresses available for mailing lists for every line of business

this source is that it may readily be subdivided according to published ratings. These ratings enable one to judge to some extent whether the prospects would be interested in a proposition.

But a list secured entirely from rating books is weak, in that the information given about each prospect is not detailed enough to permit the most desirable classification of the names. The rating books do not give street addresses and list only firm names. A letter makes a better impression with the street address, even if it is not needed. It is often better to address a member of the firm or some person who will be most interested, such as the purchasing agent—information that cannot be obtained from the rating books.

It must be obvious that in using rating books or directories it is very essential to secure the latest editions. Removals, failures, deaths—the whirl of events—make many changes in a mailing list in a year, and the later the sources, the smaller will be the percentage of dead wood.

Names secured from the rating books should be carefully checked over from the various directories which may be secured. Directories may be roughly divided into four divisions: city telephone, trade and special directories. Each may be found useful in most businesses. The retailer, the mail-order man and firms wishing to do general circularizing use all of these directories. The city directories must be used very carefully in order to avoid too many duplications of a letter in the same household, and to eliminate uninterested prospects.

A list of consumers built up entirely from a city directory is apt to show poor returns because of the possibilities of waste. In selecting names from an ordinary city directory there is no conclusive way of determining whether the persons selected will be able to use your product. The occupation and residential location are the only index of possibilities.

A manufacturer of a ten-cent cigar recently built up a big business in Chicago by means of a series of folder post cards. He compiled his list from the city directory. Professions such as doctors, lawyers, salesmen, and so on, were selected as likely prospects and these men received the circulars. Only those occupations were picked out which generally pay enough to enable the smoker to buy ten-cent cigars. Such occupations as barbers, laborers, clerks and bookkeepers were eliminated as it was assumed that these men would not usually smoke this grade of cigars.

Telephone directories, in the cities, small towns and county districts, are good sources from which to make up a list of consumers, for persons who have telephones in their residences may usually be considered prosperous enough to respond to almost any kind of a letter appeal.

A great many lines of business—particularly those having associations—get out annual directories of their members or possibly they include all men engaged in the business. Good examples of these are the bankers and lumbermen. These directories are very valuable if they are up to date and complete. They also give you the opportunity of appealing to the prospects through their association. If you are in a special industry and

want to secure one of these directories write to the secretary of your association and inquire if it publishes such a list. If the association does not, write to your trade paper and find out if such a directory is issued and where one can be obtained.

There are certain high class propositions that necessarily appeal to wealthy persons. The names of these individuals are often secured from the published Blue Books. These books are published only in the larger cities and list persons of a recognized social standing. This is a very select list but its importance may be over-estimated because of the very fact that it is the Blue list, and these persons are so constantly circularized that it is much harder to catch their attention.

There are hundreds of special directories which constitute another big source of names. These are local, state and national directories of lodges, clubs, secret organizations, commercial leagues, churches and owners of pets and luxuries which require city and state licenses, such as issued for dogs and automobiles.

These lists, for specific purposes where an argument can be linked up in some way with the organization, are almost invaluable in certain lines. These special lists and directories are secured from the secretaries of the organizations and from public officials.

If one could afford to build up a list by personal solicitation so that in addition to securing merely the name, address and occupation of each person, he could also secure such details as his approximate salary or income, his hobbies, number of children, and so on, it would make a list more valuable than any that can be obtained in other ways. But this is a prohibitive expense for most businesses, though lists might be made up in this manner by salesmen and clerks while going about their routine work and the cost would be small.

Travelling salesmen who are calling upon the trade can secure valuable lists of prospects. The difficulty is getting them to do it properly. The best method is to require them to send in a daily report showing the persons and firms visited and such details regarding each prospect as may be desired.

A wholesale house which cooperates with its dealers in their advertising, secures a consumers' mailing list by offering to help the individual dealers with letters to their trade, if they will furnish them with the names of their customers or prospects. When a new grain company was organized in Kansas City.

it had no idea where to secure a list of grain dealers and buyers. A plan was finally hit upon and circular letters were immediately sent to all the station agents of railroads leading into Kansas City. Blanks were enclosed and, if the agent would list on these the names of the most prominent local dealers and shippers, he was promised a useful novelty for his trouble. Hide and wool commission men have also used this scheme, usually paying the agent well for his trouble.

In a similar way, a country bank in Pennsylvania built up a valuable list. A letter was written to a young man in each of the surrounding towns, asking him to spend one evening listing names of prospective depositors in his town. For each one hundred names finally accepted, the bank pays twenty-five cents. When these lists were sent in they were returned to a conservative business friend in each of the towns, and corrected for spelling and desirability. The list was finally sent to the various postmasters, asking them to cross off names of persons who no longer received mail at their offices.

A Pennsylvania mail-order retailer of furniture secures lists of prospective bridegrooms by offering clergymen and county clerks twenty-five cents for the name of each man about to be married. This mail-order man sells furniture on the installment plan, and these names prove a most valuable source of business.

Many retail stores compile lists through their delivery men. A St. Paul house secured a list of 10,000 names in this way in less than four weeks. In Oklahoma, a store which had to rely on the country trade, hired a substitute rural mail man to cover every route out of his town and secure the name of the "lady of the house" at every farm. This merchant could have easily secured the names of the men on these routes from the county tax rolls, but he knew that the women buy three-fourths of the supplies and he wanted to appeal directly to them. Consequently his letters are not sent to Mrs. J. W. Smith, but to Mrs. Mary Smith, and this appeals to her. He has 1,500 of these names, and as the families average five persons, the merchant is sure that his letters are reaching not only 1,500 buyers, but 7,500. The substitute mail carrier makes his trips every six months and thoroughly revises each rural route list. The letters and illustrated circulars go out every Saturday morning, so that they may receive the best attention on Sunday.

A St. Louis firm adopted a unique method of securing names for its mailing list. The firm adopting the catalogue idea of presenting to a large number of desirable people its line of hats; but how to secure the names was the big problem. One thousand or two thousand names would not be enough, it was necessary to have a mailing list of fifteen thousand names.

The manager hit upon this scheme: he arranged a small card which was enclosed with every hat sold. On the back of this card was the following offer: "We want names for our mailing list and offer \$30.00 cash to get them. Read the advertisement on the reverse side of this card to every man over sixteen years of age and get his signature and business address. The person returning the greatest number of these cards with bona fide signatures and business addresses, by October 1, receives a cash prize of \$15.00; the next greatest number receives a cash prize of \$10.00, and the third a cash prize of \$5.00.

"Any bogus name or address given will bar the contestant from the prize. A postal card will be sent by us to prove every name and address. We supply these cards free at our store."

On the reverse side is the advertisement, "Browne's \$2 and \$3 hats are the best in town," and two blank lines for the name and address. By the use of this simple plan the store secured a mailing list of 25,000 names in ten months.

The local business man does not usually have to resort to expensive methods to make up his lists. The clerk at the counter can often secure a valuable list. In New York a big store secured, in three days, the names and addresses of 20,000 persons who visited the establishment. The buyers were drawn in by an offer of double trading stamps. Clerks stationed at the doors secured their names and addresses. Other stores have secured lists by offering souvenirs if purchasers would fill out blank cards. In a Boston store a prize was offered to the clerk securing within a month the largest number of new names of heads of families.

One merchant got out several hundred attractive but inexpensive calendars which he advertised to give away free to all who cared for them. Those who called for calendars were then asked to give their names and addresses. Children were asked to furnish the names of father and mother.

Another method by which double profit may be derived from a crowd-attracting scheme, is to conduct a voting contest, requir-

ing that each person voting record his name, address and other specified information.

Business men are becoming more and more cooperative in spirit, and it is now the custom in many localities to exchange lists. Mail-order men who are selling some specialty to mail-order buyers exchange their lists for lists of some other mail-order man selling a non-conflicting line. This exchanging of names is also growing among the retailers who are not in competition with each other.

Advertising, for many kinds of businesses, is the best means of securing a list of names. This is the purpose of almost every couponed advertisement. Persons who will answer your advertisement are interested enough in your proposition to be considered "live" prospects. Lists compiled in any other way must necessarily contain more or less waste. The cigar manufacturer who made up a mailing list from a city directory circularized many men who were not smokers, and consequently uninterested. The man who answers a cigar advertisement, on the other hand, is obviously a smoker and is interested.

A druggist in Atlanta has arrangements with the publishers of the city directory to furnish him with the names and addresses of people who move into the city from other places. This enterprising merchant mails out advertising matter at once with the hope of getting the trade of new-comers before they become permanent customers elsewhere.

A Milwaukee firm dealing in household furnishings and furniture watches the daily papers for engagement notices and dates of weddings. A letter is first sent to the bride-to-be addressed to her maiden name, calling attention to a sewing machine or something of that kind. Immediately after the wedding she is addressed as "Mrs." and followed up with advertising matter that is likely to appeal to a newly married couple.

A wholesale ice cream company at Cincinnati got a list of prospects in the neighboring towns by addressing a business man asking for the names of restaurant keepers and other users of frozen products. An offer of a gallon of cream was a sufficient inducement to secure a large list and this company found the small town to be a most profitable field in which to operate.

There is an angle to many businesses which makes it necessary to build up a list of names from special sources. The principal

special sources are: registration records of voters, county and city records, county and city tax lists, marriage and birth records, prizes and contests, want advertisements and addressing companies.

Lists from the county and city records can usually be secured from city and county clerks by offering them a suitable present or offering to pay for the time required by a stenographer to make up such a list.

A Chicago neighborhood bank made up a list of persons residing within a radius of ten blocks. Some of the names were secured from persons having savings accounts. These were classified in a card file by streets and numbers. Clerks then took the cards for each street, and on blank cards filled in the addresses of all houses for which they did not have names. Letters were then addressed, "To the person residing at 139 Mulberry St." The letter told the reader that if he or she would fill out the enclosed blank and present it at the bank, a handsome souvenir would be given to him. Within ten days this bank secured the correct names and addresses of over eighty per cent of all the persons in that neighborhood from whom it could naturally expect patronage.

An easier method for securing a list of prospects in the neighborhood is to copy the precinct registration lists. The larger cities print these, and a copy can be secured from the alderman.

An enterprising bank in St. Louis secures its names in a unique way. From the daily newspaper birth records this bank secures the names and addresses of the proud parents. After dispatching a letter advising the opening of an account in the child's name, the parent's name goes into a special file of prospects which has proved one of the most valuable in this institution. A St. Joseph, Mo., furniture store goes the bank one better by presenting each addition to the family with a teething ring. This store has a monopoly on the baby carriage trade.

County and city school superintendents, ministers and school teachers are other sources of names which are especially good for certain articles used by women and children. One of the Chicago piano companies has built up an immense list of school children by offering the school teacher a fine book of standard school songs for the names and addresses of her pupils. It is advisable to tell these persons frankly just what you wish the names for.

A good press-clipping bureau is able to furnish the names of persons and firms that appear in publications for any cause. Wholesale houses often use the press clipping bureaus to secure the names of new merchants, and men intending to go into business. Persons elected to public and private offices, the names of injured persons, and names of any kind that get into print can be supplied by the clipping bureaus. Simply outline to them the kind of names you wish, and the bureau will start its machinery working for you.

In the larger cities where there are located responsible addressing companies, lists may be purchased making it unnecessary to compile them. These lists are carefully and regularly prepared. As a general rule a responsible addressing company can furnish a list much cheaper than one can be compiled. The better addressing companies have about 2,000 classified lists. These range in size from lists containing not over a dozen names to lists containing over a million names of farmers. These lists may be purchased from the addressing companies for \$1.50 per thousand up to \$5 per thousand. Specially prepared lists cost more.

Lists furnished by these addressing companies cover the United States, Canada, a large portion of Latin America and many foreign countries. They are divided into general and special lists. The former are made up of classes, such as merchants, manufacturers, corporations and consumers. The largest general list usually contains over 1,000,000 farmers' names, and is made up from the local tax books, so that only responsible and prosperous men are included. Some of these companies have consumers' lists numbering over half a million persons that are known to be purchasers for families. This is the favorite with mail-order houses. The general list most often used is that of 120,000 county stores, divided into two classes—those rated below \$1,000 and those above.

The big point to be remembered in making up a mailing list is to make sure that it contains names of interested prospects. A list can be thrown away on a dead list, and the business man must guard against the needless waste of money on inert names.

How to *Keep* the Mailing List UP TO DATE

THE SUCCESS of a mail-order campaign is necessarily dependent, first of all, upon the ACCURACY OF THE MAILING LIST. On such a list must be kept names of "live" customers, and prospects must be added; names of deceased persons or those who have removed outside of the territory must be dropped; changes in addresses must be noted and other revisions must be made in order to eliminate the waste and to insure that each name is that of a customer or a prospect who is in the market. How this is done is explained in this chapter

THERE is but one efficient method for classifying lists of prospects and customers, and that is by means of card indexes, or a loose-leaf system which is merely an enlargement of the card index. This is because the cards can be classified and arranged in any way that is best adapted to the particular requirements of each business.

It shrinks and grows, responding to the fluctuations of the trade. You can start with one drawer and 500 cards, and nourish it until you have thousands of names—and the list will occupy only the necessary space.

The nature of a business determines how a list should be classified. Almost invariably, however, it will be arranged according to one of the two most generally used methods: the geographical or alphabetical classification. The geographical classification is usually used by firms doing business outside of a

single locality, while the alphabetical arrangement is adapted to firms selling largely in a limited district.

It is simple clerical work to build up a geographical file from a mailing list. As the names are taken from the rating books, directories or other special sources, the name and address of each prospect is written on a 3 x 5 card. These cards are grouped by states, counties and cities, and placed in cabinet drawers, which are labeled on the front by states. Where the cards in a drawer list names from two or more states, the states are indicated on the front of the drawer by labels, and on the inside by vertical card projections. The counties and cities are also indicated by guide cards. The names of prospects and customers are listed alphabetically behind state, county and town guide cards so that the card of any particular person can be found almost instantly.

The alphabetical method of filing prospects' and customers' cards is a simple proposition. The names and addresses are written on cards and filed alphabetically in as many card cabinets as are necessary. In a classification of this kind, individual cards are made more readily accessible by alphabetical guide cards, which may be used to divide the list just as much as desired.

These are the two best methods for filing mailing lists but it is necessary to guard against impairing this efficiency by mistakes made in filing.

The most common mistake is that of filing all lines of business or prospects together in such a way that it is impossible to subdivide the lists to expedite the sending of special letters for the different lines of business, or classes of prospects and customers.

It took \$10,000 recently for a certain manufacturer to prove this to his own satisfaction. He had an article which he was attempting to sell through shoe dealers, clothiers and druggists. For twelve months he circularized this list with the same letters, and the campaign was almost a total failure. Then it dawned on him that if he would interest druggists, he should write them druggists' letters; clothiers, clothiers' letters; and shoe dealers, shoe dealers' letters. He divided his list up into three divisions, covering the three lines of business, and wrote specific letters for each. Immediately the increased receipts were apparent. Since then he has more than regained the \$10,000 lost in inefficient circularizing.

If in your business you are appealing to distinct lines of trade or well defined classes of prospects and customers, it is absolutely essential that you indicate them in some way in the lists. This may be done by keeping separate lists for prospects and customers, or by indicating the divisions within the general file itself. This is done by means of projections on the individual cards, or by using colored cards.

It is absolutely necessary that prospective customers and regular customers be indicated in some way, because one should receive letters radically different from those sent to the other. One method is to maintain separate files, so that there is no danger of confusion. In this case the cards of both files are exactly the same size, so that when a prospect becomes a customer his card may be quickly transferred from the prospects' file to the proper geographical or alphabetical position in the customers' file.

If it is desired to keep the prospects' and customers' cards in the same file, this may be done by means of colored cards or projections on the cards. The objection to the colored card is that a new card of the proper color must be filled out when the prospect becomes a customer. A better method to indicate prospects' cards is by means of a tab on the card itself. Then when the first order is received and the man actually becomes a buyer, the tab can be clipped off. The advantage of an arrangement of this kind is that in getting out mailings from time to time, all that is necessary is to tell the typist whether the letters are going to prospects or customers, and she goes through the list, addressing envelopes as directed.

It is often necessary to carry a subdivision of a mailing list still further than merely to divide it up into lists of prospects and customers. Often there are classes within these two subdivisions which must be indicated so that the proper letters may be sent to each group. These classes may also be indicated by tabs and colored cards. A New York wholesaler sells six classes of retailers. Every class is indicated by tabs attached to the top of the cards. The first class may be druggists, and may be represented by a tab in the first position at the left of the card. The second may be shoe dealers, the third clothiers and so on. If a general merchant handled both clothing and shoes, his cards would have two divisions in the second and third position. When letters to druggists are going out, the girl simply addresses envelopes for all of the names indicated on the cards

with a tab in the first position at the left. This is easy for her to do, for the druggists' tabs are in a straight row from front to back of the file.

Different classes and types of prospects and customers may also be represented by using colored cards. Each class of prospects or customers then has a certain colored card, so that when sending out a letter to a specified group of prospects or customers, the girl simply addresses envelopes for all the cards of the same color.

These cards may contain as much or as little data as is necessary to carry on a letter campaign successfully. Prospects' cards may contain such information as the source of the prospect's inquiry, his rating, remarks in regard to his personal characteristics, and any facts or figures which may help in the making of the sale. Customers' cards will necessarily be more complete, for in addition to the information shown on the prospect's card, the customer's card will often show the total sales made him from month to month or year to year. These cards may also summarize a history of all the dealings a house has had with a customer. It is necessary to have this very comprehensive information on customers' cards only where the customer is to receive more or less personal letters. It is well, however, to have on the cards all the information needed for carrying on a business successfully and give satisfaction to the customer.

Where general mailings are gotten out from time to time to cover the whole list and where each sale is a transaction quickly completed, it is not necessary to have such detailed information about each prospect and customer. The price of the article sold will determine how much money can be spent on preparing and maintaining a mailing list.

Many businesses have individual conditions which necessitate the addition of some special feature in maintaining a geographical or alphabetical file. These are usually nothing more than notations, which may be indicated on the face of the card by means of special tabs or different colored cards. For instance, a large Chicago wholesale house keeps its prospects' and customers' cards in two cabinets, filed geographically by states and towns. By using five colors of cards these files have been in turn divided into five classifications, showing approximate ratings of the individual firms. In a large list this is a money-saving feature, for it would obviously be a waste of money to offer small, broken

lot bargains to big buyers or case lots to the smaller merchants who could not afford to take a quantity. Consequently, the advertising manager of this firm, desiring to offer a particular bargain to certain classes of stores, instructs the girl to address the blue or red card, or whatever the case may be, and the mail goes out, appealing only to those buyers who for reasons of price, quantity or quality would be interested.

An additional feature used by this house on its mailing list has resulted in much business. In the lower left corner of each card is set a key number which indicates the number of the salesman calling upon this customer. This number, printed on the envelopes, enables the girl to separate them by salesmen, and on special occasions the house gives its communications a personal touch by having the salesmen sign form letters to their customers and prospects.

Businesses quoting delivered prices have a greater problem in arranging their mailing lists, because of the difference in freight rates. A mail-order house in Buffalo, which solicits orders from prospects and customers in the territory between Cleveland and Boston, has its list subdivided into six trade zones fixed by the railroad rates. The cheapest rate is known as the Buffalo-Pittsburg schedule, and the highest is the Buffalo-Boston schedule. These are indicated on the face of the cabinet drawer, and the cards are alphabetically arranged in these by prospects' or buyers' names. This enables the company to send individual letters, quoting correct prices to any desired district.

Files for mailing lists, which have been described here, are satisfactory for reference purposes, and for letter campaigns where the letters are mailed out at regular periods to the entire list. But when inquiries are received either as the result of advertisements or circular letters, it is necessary to provide some means for establishing an automatic follow-up in the card file. That is, it is necessary to arrange the cards so that follow-up letters may be sent to the prospect or customer at regular intervals, following the receipt of his inquiry. A separate follow-up file may be maintained but this is an unnecessary expenditure of time and money, for it necessitates the filling out of duplicate cards. It is far better to adopt some arrangement whereby the automatic follow-up may be indicated in the general file itself.

The best and most practical method is to have each card divided across the top into thirty-one or fifty-two spaces, to indicate the days of the month or the weeks of the year. If the card is not large enough for this number of spaces it can be divided into fifteen spaces—one space for every two days. Then when an inquiry is received, the first follow-up letter is sent to the prospect and a metal clip is placed over the date when it is desired to send the prospect the second follow-up letter. Thus, if an inquiry is received on the fifth and it is desired to follow-up this ten days later, a clip is placed on the space reserved for the fifteenth of the month and the second follow-up letter goes out on that day. This same process is carried on throughout the whole follow-up; the same card is used for each month. A space is reserved on the card to indicate what follow-up letters have been sent to each prospect. These are checked off as the follow-up campaign progresses on each person.

When this system is once started it becomes so automatic that an ordinary clerk can take care of a follow-up campaign. Each morning the clerk goes through the file, addressing the proper letters to prospects, as indicated by the position of the metal clips and by the notations on the face of each card. Thus, if today is the fifth of the month, all of the follow-up letters which are to be sent out are indicated by a straight row of clips from the front to the back of the file, all arranged in the fifth position on the various cards.

Where it is impracticable to use this system for some reason, a somewhat similar system may be substituted. In this case a separate file is maintained—a file just large enough to contain the size of envelope used in the follow-up series of letters. It is provided with thirty-one guide cards for the thirty-one days of the month. When an inquiry has been received and the first letter has been mailed, a second envelope is addressed and placed behind the guide card a week or ten days in advance of the date of the receipt of the inquiry. Each day the clerk goes to this file and picks out the envelopes behind the day's date and encloses the proper letter, which is usually indicated by some key number in the lower left corner of the envelope.

Once a mailing list is compiled and made up, it becomes a valuable asset to any business, but this asset may be turned into a source of complaint or loss of money unless it is kept up to date. It must be regularly corrected. Removals, deaths, failures,

transfers and mistakes wreck a mailing list unless it is overhauled at regular intervals. The average list of retailers undergoes a fifteen per cent change in a year. Consequently the manufacturer or wholesaler, addressing retailers, must watch his lists very carefully. Even so stable a list as manufacturers and wholesalers will change about ten per cent every twelve months. Certain transient occupations, such as barbering, will have a yearly change as high as thirty per cent.

The correcting of a mailing list is not difficult if it is done regularly. This is all there is to it: When the first mailing goes out under a two-cent stamp, the post office returns all letters which it is unable to deliver. Across the face of the envelopes will be stamped such notations as, "Insufficient address," "Moved. Left no address," "Unclaimed," "No such street number," "No such office in street named," "Name not in directory," or "Deceased." The nature of this letter will show you whether to take the name from the list or to try to find the correct address. The first mailing will show up all of these deficiencies in a list. If these are corrected at once little difficulty will be experienced throughout the year. Every mailing will have a few return letters, but if the list is kept corrected the return letters may be kept down to an insignificant number.

At the end of six months or a year a list needs a thorough revision—first, for names of new prospects and second for the changes in name and location of those already listed. Clerks can do this or the work can be entrusted to a responsible addressing company. In either case the operation is simple.

If it is a state or national list of retail merchants it may be compared, town by town, from the latest rating book for the correctness of the name and the existence of each person or firm. Cards are made out for new firms and individuals with satisfactory rating, and are placed in their proper geographical and alphabetical positions. After the list has been corrected in this way, the addressing companies will check over for the correct addresses from the latest city directory.

One of the big Chicago wholesale houses in addition to keeping its lists corrected daily from return letters, letters from customers and reports from salesmen, has an effective system for revising the entire list every six months. On January 1 and July 1 the latest issue of a rating book is secured. This is cut up and rebound into forty or forty-five books, each

representing one or two states. They are then distributed among as many girls, who compare the mailing list with the directories and in this way the work is finished in a few days.

The manager of the department blue pencils towns where the house has an exclusive account, and the girls in seeking new names skip these towns. If a name on the mailing list is not reported in the rating books, these cards are put in special drawers and sent to the credit department, which determines whether the name shall remain in the file. The new names which the girls select are listed on cards and, if "O. K'd" by the credit department, are at once put into the general files.

This house is constantly securing new customers. Daily slips from the bookkeeping department show these. If a new customer's name is in the prospects' file, it is taken out and slipped into the proper geographical position in the customers' file. If the new customer has no card in the prospects' file a new one is immediately made.

So important is this correcting of lists that many firms from time to time get out special letters of inquiry, asking the recipients if they have their address correct. In these letters are enclosed stamped post cards for the recipient to sign and return. Some banks print across the top of their monthly statements, "Is this your correct address?" An eastern manufacturing company gets out a circular letter inquiry sent to bank cashiers throughout the country. In this letter the company asks if a certain person is still in business—a form letter is used and the name is filled in—or if he has moved away—if so, where; and if there are any new retailers in town handling the same line. These letters bring individual information that is extremely valuable to the firm.

How to correct a mailing list will have to be largely determined by the individual conditions of a business, but one basic rule to remember is that the list should be corrected from day to day, and once a year, at least, it must be thoroughly revised. It does not pay to send letters to persons who do not exist, or who are out of business. It certainly does not promote pleasant relations to send letters with an incorrect address or a misspelt name. Once a list is compiled and classified it should be regularly and systematically corrected.

How to Put “Key” Marks on Letters and CHECK RETURNS

IN ORDER to trace the returns from various mailing of circular letters that are sent out in the course of a sales campaign, distinguishing marks are used to show just which letters pull replies. By means of such “keys”—ranging from address numbers to tinted return postals—the sales manager is able to tell the comparative results of each mailing and to guide himself accordingly. This chapter tells the various ways of using “key” marks and of recording them

IF a business is so small that only two or three lots of circular letters a year are mailed to the same class of prospects and customers, there is no necessity of keying the letters. The returns from each volley will follow the mailing so closely that there can be no mistake about which letters bring results and from whom these orders are secured. But most businesses appeal to different groups of prospects and with a large number of different form letters it becomes necessary to adopt some means for checking the returns on each mailing.

The information is desired for two purposes: to show which letters are pulling the desired results, and to keep a record of the returns secured from each class or group of prospects and customers. The advantage of such records is apparent, for it is frequently found in tests that a certain letter does not pull and must be replaced with another. It is also found where lists are subdivided by

Thus the keying of letters either for tests or general mailings and the checking of returns resolves itself into an accounting

[illegible]

This is an actual test record which showed what classes it would be profitable to circularize further. The check marks show that the sales manager decided not to follow up civil engineers, grocers and exporters on this particular proposition

There are two kinds of letters which should always be keyed and checked on returns: sales letters and collection letters. They both have the specific function of securing money, and are consequently so important that their returns should be carefully checked. Two or more form sales letters which are sent out at the same time, calling for the return of some enclosure, are the easiest to key and check.

The most practicable way is to use an enclosure which must be returned with the inquiry or order. This enclosure generally consists of a self-addressed, return envelope or post card, an order blank, inquiry blank or card, or the coupon from an accompanying circular.

When return envelopes or post cards are to be used, it is easy to have printed on them some distinguishing mark by which they can be recognized. Then, as they come back, they may be readily classified and credited to the letter which brought them in and to the list of prospects or customers to which this letter went.

These return envelopes or post cards are keyed by several methods, any one of which is satisfactory. A key should be selected that makes the prospect or customer feel that his letter will receive individual attention and if possible it should be one that he will use in writing even if the enclosure is omitted. Otherwise there will be some untraceable returns.

One of the best methods is to print a name on the enclosure or request the prospect in replying to address his letter to a designated clerk or to a certain department. Clerks are given numbers or letters as, "Clerk 5," "Clerk B," "Clerk A3," up to a reasonable figure. Each letter has a certain clerk number or letter, and a careful record of these are kept on the result cards. Where this method is used, care must be taken that the clerk numbers or letters do not run so high as to be ridiculous.

An equally good method is to request the prospect in writing to refer to a certain department or desk, as "Dept. C," or "Desk 3."

Occasionally letters are keyed by asking the writer in replying to refer to a certain person; usually the person who is signing the letter. Where only the firm signature is affixed, the prospect is asked to refer to a certain individual or in big firms to some fictitious initials or name.

Another method is to use different room numbers for different letters or even different street numbers.

When any of these methods are used, the return envelopes, post cards, order blanks and other enclosures are stamped or printed with the clerk's number or letter, the department or desk number, or with the name or initials of the person who is supposed to receive the reply. All of these methods for key-

ing letters have the important advantage of making the recipient believe that his reply is to receive individual attention. It has been found that in the majority of cases when these methods are used the recipient unconsciously uses the key, although he may not use any of the enclosures in making his reply.

Then there are a number of keying methods which are not intended to make the prospect believe his reply is to receive individual attention, nor will these keys be unconsciously used for they are applied only to the enclosures.

Various kinds of codes are printed or stamped on the order blank, envelope, return post card, or other enclosure to be returned with the prospect's reply. These codes consist of letters, numbers, cabalistic signs or anything the writer of the letter may wish, but it is wise to use some inconspicuous method which the recipient cannot detect and will not notice, because such a discovery may prejudice an otherwise favorably impressed prospect.

A good method for keying all enclosures is to print in a corner, in very small type, a notation such as, "Form 101,000." If the reader notices it at all he thinks it a printer's mark. This code can be expanded so that different numbers on the same enclosure will indicate which enclosures are to go to different classes of prospects, and so made the basis of checking subsequent returns. A series of letters or letters and numbers could be used in the same way.

Where only small mailings are to be sent out, small numbers or letters can be stamped on the various enclosures. When you wish to make the recipient of your letter believe that your offer is made to only a selected few, a good method is to stamp all enclosures with a serial numbering machine. Then a memorandum is made that all numbers between, say 200 and 800, go to a certain class of prospects, and so on. These numbers can be kept down by using little prefixes and suffixes.

Some circulars used with letters have coupons similar to a magazine advertisement, and these can be keyed in any of the ways described.

It should be remembered that all efficient keys must be written into the letter or placed on some enclosure in such a way that the recipient is likely to refer to it or use it in making his reply. But the prospect so often does not refer to the key that

precautionary keys are used in every campaign, so that in one way or another the reply may be traced to its source.

Two other keying methods occasionally employed are to enclose different colored return envelopes, order blanks or post cards, or to print them in colors, the different shades of paper and ink representing different keys.

Where follow-up campaigns are made, the enclosures in each successive follow-up should be identified by some key so that when these enclosures are returned with the reply the

LIST	<i>General Mercantile</i>		TYPE MAILING	<i>mailing</i>	KEY	<i>BY X</i>
PROPOSITION	<i>Mountain Route</i>		CASH APPROVAL	<i>10-10-11</i>	DATE	<i>2-2-1913</i>
LETTER	<i>"You have yet to find"</i>		ENVELOPE	<i>6 1/2" x 9"</i>	CHECKED	<i>1913</i>
CIRCULAR	<i>Red and Black</i>		QUANTITY—ESTIMATED	<i>2,000</i>	QUANTITY—ACTUAL	
OTHER ENCLOSURES	<i>Return post card</i>		POSTAGE	<i>2</i>	COST PER M	

DATE	MAILED	DATE	RESULTS	DATE	RESULTS	DATE	RESULTS	DATE	RESULTS	DATE	RESULTS	DATE	RESULTS	DATE	RESULTS
4-9-10	14724	4-4	1	4-30	10	5-23	1	FOR L		FOR L		FOR L		FOR L	
4-6	17000	4-5	10	5-3	6	5-31	2								
4-5	24500	4-7	86	5-4	7		3								
4-6	23678	4-8	119	5-6	7	6-4	1								
4-7	23673	4-11	112	5-9	6	6-6	2								
4-8	256	4-13	239	5-5	7	6-11	1								
4-15	3000	4-14	33	5-16	5	6-7	2								
4-16	2076	4-15	91	5-16	5	6-31	1								
	118604	4-16	58	5-17	2	12-05									
		4-17	91	5-18	2										
		4-19	60	5-19	2										
		4-20	15	5-19	2										
		4-21	33	5-20	2										
		4-22	25	5-21	2										
		4-23	35	5-21	3										
		4-24	20	5-21	2										
		4-25	22	5-25	3										
		4-27	2	5-27	1										
		4-29	16	5-27	1										

Form I: This form of record shows the mailing each day and the returns. These cards furnish valuable data in working up future advertising campaigns

order or inquiry may be traced to the proper letter. In a follow-up campaign, however, there is always a chance that the prospect has been influenced by some previous letter, and for this reason, no matter how carefully the letters are keyed, the returns cannot be checked with absolute accuracy.

The keying plan determined, some accurate means must be provided for checking the returns on easily accessible records. A most successful Chicago mail-order house, which carefully keys and tests every letter sent out, checks the returns on 5 x 8 cards (Form I). Each card is the complete record of a mailing. The card is ruled to show the list circularized, the proposition,

the letter, circular and other enclosures sent; whether it is a cash or approval offer, kind of envelope, estimated number on list, the actual quantity mailed, the postage, key, date, order number and cost per thousand names. This company checks its tests on loose-leaf sheets, described elsewhere, so that only the general mailing results are shown on the card. Where it is desired to keep a classification of the total results from various classes of prospects and customers, this may be done either by using different colored cards for each class, or by re-ruling this card so that the necessary classes can be accounted for in the vertical columns.

Below the general notations on the card are vertical columns to show the number of letters mailed each day, and in the next columns the results received on each day. The figures in the columns of the card show the actual statistics of a campaign. In eight days 110,604 letters were mailed. In seventy-eight days 1,890 orders had been received. This card is filed away with hundreds of others and is constantly used in working up new selling campaigns.

There is one other kind of letter which should be keyed, tested and checked—the collection letter. But collection letters are mailed out to different individuals as their bills become due, so it is impossible to key and check returns the same as with sales letters.

There are a certain number of accounts falling due each day and month, and about an equal number settled during the same periods, so a form letter collection system becomes a continuous proposition, and must be checked accordingly. A New York house does this by means of a loose-leaf book in which each letter for each month has a separate sheet (Form II). There are seven form letters used in this collection process, and in their regular order the results for each letter are tabulated.

These sheets are ruled across the top to show the letter and the month mailed. Below in vertical columns are entered the dates, the number of letters mailed on each day, the number of replies received on the same date, and the amount of money. As will be seen from the accompanying illustration, the letters and money received on the same dates letters are mailed must be credited several days back. Thus the results of the first few days shown on this March sheet must be considered as coming from the same letter mailed the last

few days in February. The results shown by months are approximately correct. For the year they are absolutely correct.

The total results as shown on this sheet are secured by a clerk who accounts for every dollar that comes into the department. Every payment that comes in is checked from the delinquent's card, on the back of which is noted the letters the debtor has received. The money is credited to the last

LETTER <u>A</u>											
MONTH <u>March</u>											
DATE MAILED	NO.	NO. REPLIES	AMT. RECEIVED			DATE MAILED	NO.	NO. REPLIES	AMT. RECEIVED		
1											
2		34									
3		66	6	8	50						
4		21	1	3	00						
5	75	34	4	2	50						
6	-	44	8	9	50						
7	73	19	3	8	00						
8	-	-	-	-	-						
9	322	47	9	5	00						
26	105	17	3	8	00						
27	21	20	6	0	00						
28		37	6	8	50						
29											
30											
31		63	1	2	60						
TOTAL	3712		21	5	30	TOTAL					

Form II: This is a page from a loose-leaf book for keeping a record of collection letters sent out, the number of replies from each and the amount of money that the different letters brought in

letter. These totals are added up each day and entered on the proper sheet in the loose-leaf book.

In the same way the number of each letter mailed out is given to him to be entered in this book.

This is a satisfactory system to use not only on articles of the same price, but it is used just as effectively on instalment accounts and bills of varying amounts. Exactly the same procedure is used in both cases. The loose-leaf book of collection letters is used constantly, for it is an exact record of what each letter is doing from day to day and month to month,

HOW to *Test* Lists of Names —and WHEN

THE NUMBER of *inquiries* or “returns” that may be expected in response to sales letters sent out to large lists of “prospects” is no longer the same uncertain, hit-or-miss element that it once was. By means of modern methods of reproduction, of special “tests,” knowledge of business conditions, the influence of the seasons and of the countless other elements that effect mail sales, the rates of inquiries to letters have become gradually raised as the causes of success have been analyzed and reduced almost to scientific principles. This chapter contains some valuable “tips” that have been learned through the experience of others

A RETAIL jeweler with a large mail-order department was complaining to an advertising man that he had to figure that one mailing in five would be more or less of a failure. His practice was to decide on some offer, write his letter, get up his circular, buy his stamps and cover his mailing list. If returns were large, he rejoiced; if the returns were small, he pocketed the loss and hoped for better “luck” next time—it was all a game of chance.

When the advertising man told his jeweler friend that all this hit-and-miss soliciting could be eliminated, he was amazed. The jeweler—like hundreds of other business men—had taken it for granted that there was no way of determining, in advance, whether a proposition would “take,” or whether a letter would pull the desired returns.

A furniture factory suddenly became convinced that it was overlooking an important field in not selling knock-down furniture by mail. The manager secured a list of 200,000 names of mail-order buyers from an addressing company and went in heavily on printed matter that he determined to send out at once; his only thought was to get into the field before older concerns had too much of a hold on the trade.

The broadside of advertising letters and circulars were sent out the latter part of March and it was an April-fool joke for the house as far as results were concerned. The manager was disappointed but his determination was not shaken and he took occasion to go to Chicago to confer with a friend who had made a great success in mail-order merchandising.

"In the first place," the friend told him, "this is an early spring and you can't expect to interest farmers in furniture. This time of year they are out of doors from four or five in the morning until nine at night—there is no time to think about inside furniture to say nothing about time for putting your kind of furniture together.

"The time to hit the line hard is late in the fall, but before you do that get up several different letters and different ways of presenting the proposition. You can expect some replies early in the fall all right; send out tests of each letter, say three or four hundred, and see which one pulls and then mail the whole list along in November—you can absolutely count on three or four times as many replies as in your test because the season will be more favorable for your particular line."

The manager found that he had paid heavily for his first lesson in mail-order selling but he was determined to profit by his experience. He followed the advice of his friend; he tested his propositions thoroughly and, when the campaign was actually launched, the returns surpassed his expectations. But he figured that the profits were not as important as the convincing demonstration that there are certain definite, clearly defined principles underlying every form of merchandising—even in selling by mail.

So when you have decided to circularize a list of 10,000 or 200,000 names and have your letter and enclosures—stop for ten days. Take 500 or 1,000 typical names from this list and send your matter out to them. The returns you get from this section of the list ought to be a criterion. You can

figure that just about the same percentage of results will be obtained from the whole list.

There is no more excuse for mailing out thousands of letters and circulars without first having a definite idea of what returns may be expected than there is in investing thousands of dollars without first making the ordinary investigations and using the ordinary precautions.

Testing letters and letter propositions is merely the application of the simple law of averages. The world is made up of such definite classes and types of persons that when they are considered in large numbers they lose much of their individuality—so much so, in fact, that one can write a letter to the average farmer, a letter to the average housewife, a letter to the average lawyer and be reasonably sure that the same letters will appeal to all farmers and all housewives and all lawyers in much the same way.

This sums up all there is to the primary idea of making a test. If the returns on the test show a satisfactory profit over the expense of making the test, it is safe to assume that the entire mailing will pay accordingly, providing the mailing is made under *identically the same conditions*.

That is the key note of making tests and it takes into account every outside contingency which may make a mailing produce results entirely different from those produced by the test. For example, one cold February a publisher got out a test on a book which brought such excellent returns that it was immediately decided to get out the entire mailing. But before the mailing was completed, an unusual period of extremely warm weather threw the entire country into a "spring fever" epidemic. The thought of sending for and reading the business book pictured too much mental labor at the time the prospects were reading the circular, and consequently the order blanks were dropped listlessly into the waste basket. The mailing pulled little more than half the percentage of the test.

This is merely one contingency which must be guarded against. Many special unforeseen conditions may arise, but these are general conditions, which must be considered in making every test and mailing:

Business conditions,

Weather,

Seasons, Sundays and holidays,

Local conditions.

In making a test or mailing, the general and specific business conditions play a large part in the results. This is particularly true if the mailing goes to business men who retrench on all purchases as soon as there is the slightest indication of a depression. And to some extent a lack of prosperity affects the purchases of every buyer. So it is necessary to be assured that the business conditions are as favorable to the proposition to be exploited with letters as when you made the test.

The weather is directly responsible for returns. Letters received during a period of continued rain storms, or a continued dry spell, are not apt to receive serious consideration, especially from the small retailer who is directly dependent upon crops for his prosperity. Every person is indirectly affected by a crop shortage, but the man who is in business for himself in an agricultural district is the first to appreciate this and guard his cash drawer accordingly.

Businesses securing trade by means of letters have found it advisable to divide the year up into three seasons, in which mail-order solicitation may be carried on profitably. These seasons are: fall, winter, and early spring. The fall is an exceptionally good season, especially after a successful harvest. The farmers have money, and the whole country is in an optimistic mood. And it is at this time that most business houses mark out their policies for the ensuing year. Nearly every proposition stands its best chance at this time. This fall season merges almost imperceptibly into the winter months, which constitute the long mail-order period of big orders. This steady period of winter soliciting takes on a new spurt of life in the early spring, and is generally abandoned during the summer months.

Now coming to the smaller variations: just as there are certain seasons in which it is best to conduct a mail-order business, so are there certain times in each month and week when letters secure the best attention. A Chicago mail-order man, soliciting business men exclusively, absolutely forbids any mail going out of his house so that it will reach the addressee on Monday or Saturday. This rule is made because Saturday in the larger cities is usually but a "half-day" and because Monday with the accumulated mail of two days is always a busy time. It is also a fact that most men are more or less out of the spirit of their work on the second day of the week.

Consequently, mail should be sent out so that it will reach the addressee somewhere near the middle of the week. This is easily accomplished by the person having the mail in charge. One manager has a chart under the glass top of his desk which indicates the postal time between his city and all other important cities and states in which his house does business. With the aid of this chart he indicates each morning what mail shall be prepared and mailed during the day.

In most cases, mail should be addressed so as not to reach the addressee on Sunday or a holiday, for he usually gets it the next day—a busy day. It is frequently desirable, however, to have mail reach the consumer on Sunday when it is addressed to his home and when it is reasonably certain that the prospect goes to the post office for his mail. On propositions for the home, or to some member of the family, the appeal made on Sunday is doubly effective.

Just as the first and last days of the working week find the business man especially crowded with work and so unable to give his mail proper attention, so are the first and last days of the month apt to find him at high pressure, and least able to give letters the attention they might otherwise receive. It is well to plan the mail so that it will reach the prospect in the middle of the week and in the middle of the month, although this applies mainly to the business man.

The fourth general condition which must be considered in making tests or mailings are the local conditions—local weather conditions, local business depressions, strikes and other local influences which would naturally tend to minimize returns. Reports on any part of the country may be secured from the nearest weather bureau, and can be made up from newspaper clippings.

These are general conditions, which must be taken into consideration in making tests and every business has special trade circumstances which must be given careful consideration.

And remember these points particularly in your tests: if you test out a proposition in the booming fall, don't send out a big mailing on it in the lagging spring and expect the same returns; test it out again. Don't send your test out to reach the prospect Tuesday and bungle your general mailing so that it reaches the bulk of the list Monday and expect results to live up to the test. If your test on refrigerators went out in a prematurely

warm March, and it snows ten inches the day after your mailing goes out in April—you lose.

If, however, this test idea is thoroughly understood and a house has records that give experiences of the past, more liberties can be taken. For instance, a specialty house business picks up with a rush just after the first of September. If it waited to send its tests out until the season was on, it would lose much seasonable time—a month or more—and thousands of dollars, worth of orders. So it sends out the tests in July and August; then it adds to the returns a certain percentage of increase which its records of many years have shown that fall mailings will pull over summer mailings. If—with this percentage added—the test pulls requisite returns, the entire mailing is shot out the moment the season opens; if it falls short, other tests are made. So any favorable or unfavorable circumstances may be discounted or appreciated.

The test letters themselves should be sent to an average list—a list of persons who are typical of the entire list. If the names are geographically arranged, it will be far better to circularize some 500 or 1,000 names in a state your experience has shown to be average, or one where the returns are likely to be lowest, rather than to select the best state—and then be disappointed in your entire mailing. If the list is alphabetically arranged, it is usually best to select the first 500 or 1,000 names and compile the returns secured from letters to these prospects.

If several individual letters are to be tested, in an effort to decide which pulls the best, they should be sent out to separate lists as nearly alike as possible. When one test fails and the offer is put up in a different form, test on a different group; the names in the previous group have already been approached and would not offer a fair test.

After taking all these conditions and suggestions into consideration, making a test becomes simply a question of selecting the names which are to be circularized, getting out the letters and checking the results. Any number may be used for a test, but usually 500 names are sufficient on which to estimate returns. The returns from the 500 names selected for the test will indicate whether it will pay to send out a letter, or whether it is advisable to rewrite it and test it again. This is an individual proposition and must be determined by each firm upon the nature of its proposition and the results it tries to secure.

Checking the returns from a test is simply keeping a record, and systems similar to those described in the preceding chapter may be used, except that the process must be absolutely accurate, to get an exact line on the pulling power.

One mail-order house has cards ruled vertically to show the names of the list tested, the date the test letters were mailed, the number of letters on each test, the state to which the letters were mailed and the key of the enclosure. The key is necessary with this house, because many different lines of business are operated, and without it there would be no way of classifying the orders according to the different lines of business.

To the right of the three first columns are thirty-one additional columns, for the days of the month, and a final column in which to enter the total results.

The date columns are left blank, to be filled in on the date the tests begin. This arrangement allows for checking all the returns for a thirty-one day period. Propositions where the returns require a longer period necessitate a second card. The cards are filed in cabinets, and subdivided by propositions so that the results of all tests, on each proposition, are in the same place in the file, ready for comparison and inspection.

The figures on the form on page 112 show the results of fourteen actual tests made on as many classes of business and occupations. They were all circularized on the same proposition, using 500 names for each test. This was a proposition on which it did not pay to circularize unless more than seven orders were received for every 500 letters mailed.

Consequently, as shown by the table, civil engineers, grocers, and experts were not circularized further. The manager of mail sales has checked the lists which are to receive the entire mailing and instructs his circularizing department accordingly. This sample card for checking the returns of tests may be adapted to the needs of any business.

Tests should precede every letter campaign. The general conditions and situations which govern the results of tests and mailings, are identical in all lines of business. In addition there are certain trade and special situations which must be recognized in mailing out a test on an entire campaign. The one bed-rock pointer is this: be sure that a mailing is made under identically the same conditions as those under which the tests are made.

The IDEA BEHIND The Letter

PART IX SCHEMES THAT HAVE MADE LETTERS PULL CHAPTER 38

BEHIND EVERY *business communication there should be some specific purpose, some definite aim. This does not mean that the purpose should be conspicuous, for the letter writer should be a diplomat and the LONGEST WAY AROUND may be the SHORTEST ROUTE to the DESIRED END. So the strong letter has behind it a specific scheme—sometimes apparent; sometimes concealed—but a scheme that grips the interest of the reader and induces him to send you the information, or the order or the money that you want. This chapter gives clever schemes and actual letters that show how the “idea behind” may add to the pulling power of written messages*

THE men who called at your office this morning—each one of them had some definite purpose. It might not have been apparent, or the apparent object might not have been the real object. One may have tried to interest you in some investment scheme; another wanted information or a favor; another tried to sell you something—or find an approach for a sale at a future time.

So with the letters that come to your desk. Behind every one is a definite idea—possibly it is an out-and-out sales letter; possibly it is a forerunner—the first of a follow-up; possibly the real purpose is concealed.

Postage is wasted unless every letter has a definite mission. And your Class A correspondent tries to incorporate some

Dear Sir:

Have you been reading the series of articles on Office Economies that have been running in the Progressive Journal? It is our opinion that these are the most practical, helpful articles ever written on system in handling office routine and so we have asked the publishers for permission to reprint them in pamphlet form.

They have granted our request and the articles are being printed in an attractive little booklet, together with all the original illustrations, charts and diagrams--54 practical schemes and methods for taking up the slack in office work, cutting out unnecessary details and handling routine operations more expeditiously.

Do you want one of these booklets to keep? It is yours for the asking. Fill out the enclosed blank and one will be sent postpaid and without a cent of obligation on your part.

Very truly yours,

CENTRAL OFFICE SUPPLY COMPANY.

The idea behind this letter is half-concealed, half-revealed. The firm offers to send the booklet free—and a catalogue goes with it which lists and prices the devices and systems described in the articles that have been reprinted from an office supply journal

specific scheme in every letter—the idea behind. It is only the beginner who fires his shots broadcast, hit-or-miss, depending on the laws of chance for their effect.

Mrs. Jones gets a letter from the manufacturer of some toilet preparation telling about the superiority of his product and the attractive way in which it is put up. Then, when desire has been created, he offers to send her a free sample if she will fill out the enclosed post card. The card gives space not only for her name and address, but for the name of the local druggists. On the surface of the letter it is merely a proposition to get Mrs. Jones to try this new preparation, but the scheme behind is to give the manufacturer ammunition with which he can go to the druggist and say, "Here are customers of yours who are sending to us for our goods because you don't handle them. You are losing sales—and profit—by not putting in this line." In this way, Mrs. Jones unwittingly puts into the manufacturer's hands a "big stick" by which the local dealer is brought into line—and that was the idea behind the original letter.

122 THE "IDEA BEHIND" IN HANDLING COMPLAINTS

Dear Madam:

If you are boiling and broiling over a hot cook stove every time you prepare a meal--here is your chance to avoid such unnecessary discomfort.

Or, if you are tired of sweeping and mopping and cleaning about a dirty, dusty coal stove--we can save you these troublesome duties.

For the next twenty days we are going to install 100 gas stoves in homes free of charge and give the use of the stove absolutely without cost for a period of six months. The stoves we offer are the latest model Fancy Cooker, equipped with baking, broiling and toasting ovens. They are beauties--clean and practical for any kitchen.

You needn't keep the stove if, at the end of six months, you want to go back to the old drudgery of cooking with coal. You can order it out at our expense at any time, but if you want to keep it we will give you the opportunity to pay for it at the rate of \$2.00 a month.

This does not call for the expenditure of a cent of your money, except for gas--which, you will find, is a very cheap fuel for cooking purposes. As there are only 100 of these stoves to be sent out in this way, it will be necessary for you to fill out the enclosed slip and mail at once or you will be disappointed.

Yours truly,

CENTRAL GAS & SUPPLY CO.

The idea behind this letter is not to sell a stove but to sell gas. The stoves are not only sold to consumers at cost but under unusually liberal terms, for the first step is to educate the housewife to the convenience of gas. Experience has shown the gas companies that after six months' trial a family seldom goes back to a coal range so this letter is sent out to increase the number of consumers

In the chapter on "Making Capital Out of Complaints" letters are given that actually solicited complaints from former customers. Apparently the purpose was to do the square thing by the customer, and it was—but the idea behind struck deeper than that. It was to adjust the complaint in such a way that good will would be re-established—and more trade result. There is nothing that the straightest-laced man could take exception to in such a policy, and it is good business: it takes care of the grievance and it paves the way for future sales—both sides are beneficiaries.

Savings banks frequently send out letters telling of the loss of someone who hid his savings in an old sugar bowl, or some

Dear Sir:

A little over a year ago we hired a chemical expert and gave him these instructions: "We want you to produce a non-smutting carbon paper that will make fifteen to twenty clear copies."

Last week he delivered a case of the paper at our store and told us to try it out, test it thoroughly and see if it did not fill the bill.

We have been trying it in a small way and it appears all that we could desire but before putting it on the market we want it proved up absolutely so we are going to ask you to help us out. Won't you let us send over a box of it and have your girls use it for a week--and then give us your honest opinion? We don't want to sell a single sheet of it unless it is just as we claim--actually superior to any other on the market. We know your office has a reputation for turning out high class work and we want to have you try it.

Just drop the enclosed stamped card in the mail and we will deliver a box the same day.

Very truly yours,

W.H./O.L.

Adams & Adams

This letter was sent out by a manufacturer of office supplies to the head correspondents, chief clerks and office managers of several large firms, obviously to get an expert opinion, but the idea behind was to introduce a new brand of carbon paper. The subtle flattery which asked for a man's opinion etched the name of the new brand on the minds of every person addressed, assured a careful trial of the paper, and its real merit ultimately lead to its use in many of the offices, while the reports, written on the stationery of these large firms, proved the most effective advertising in introducing the product to dealers and smaller users

other story bearing an obvious moral. There may not be a word about opening an account but clearly that is the idea behind.

The corset manufacturer who wrote to merchants asking for information about their corset department, size, number of employees, and so forth, "for statistical data" which he was compiling, was in reality working to revise his mailing list—that was the scheme behind his letter.

Following the San Francisco fire a certain insurance company was supposed to have been hard hit, and the management saw from the tone of the agents' letters that these reports were shaking their confidence to the great detriment of their work. So the president wrote a letter calling their attention to the fact that large funds were available for investment in farm

Dear Sir:

It costs us on an average \$27.50 to sell our Rex Duplicating machine through agents or house salesmen. That is not a big selling expense but we are wondering if it wouldn't be better business to drop the salesmen, cut \$27.50 off the price, and sell direct to consumers.

What do you think about this plan? Would you buy a Rex at the cut price of \$67.50 either cash or monthly instalments? We are going to put it up to the business men themselves and have decided upon a voting contest among 1,000 men. You are one of the 1,000. We are enclosing a numbered ballot and want you to tell us which you think is the better scheme, which plan appeals most to you? We shall be looking for your vote.

Very truly yours,

I.C.R./N.B.

ECONOMY MANUFACTURING CO.

The idea behind this letter was a selling scheme for the ballot was an order for a machine at the reduced price. There was no deception—it was simply a new angle of presentation in which the buying idea was submerged and the “voting” idea was made more prominent

mortgages and for the agents to be on the lookout for desirable loans. As a matter of fact, the agents were too busy to hunt up mortgage loans but the scheme had the desired effect. The idea behind the letter was to inspire confidence, which it did, not only reassuring the agents but giving them “evidence” they could show to hesitating prospects. A letter telling the agents not to pay any attention to the rumors and that the company was on a sound footing would not have been nearly so effective.

A mail-order music house offered to send a handsome calendar to all who sent for the new catalogue before a certain date. Distributing the catalogue was really a secondary purpose; the main purpose was to revise the mailing list, cutting out of the active files those who did not respond.

In an infinite variety of ways the correspondent weaves his letter around a definite scheme. These letters and schemes here given are merely illustrations of how the longest way around may be the shortest way to the objective point. In the business letter there is opportunity for strategy no less than for diplomacy. This does not mean deception or misrepresentation but a clever angle of approach, a unique method of presentation, a far-reaching scheme—and these are the legitimate tools of every business man.

The CLEVER SCHEME That Compels Attention

PART IX SCHEMES THAT HAVE MADE LETTERS PULL CHAPTER 39

THE AVERAGE PERSON receives so much mail that he cannot give more than a passing glance to any letters but those dealing with subjects in which he is consciously interested. The clever correspondent must take advantage of that passing glance and PROJECT SOME ATTENTION-GRIPPER that will induce him to read the message. The letter may be so original or so strong that it will force itself upon the notice of the busiest prospect, but many correspondents REINFORCE THE MESSAGE itself by some scheme for catching the eye—some interesting statement on the envelope or at the head of the letter; some unusual style or color of stationery; some unique enclosure—any physical feature that will make the letter stand out from the mass

A BUSY executive was handed a bundle of letters—replies to an advertisement for a correspondent to fill a vacancy. Towards the bottom of the pile of conventional white envelopes a bright scarlet edge was conspicuous.

Without hesitation he pulled it out, opened it and read:

"Just as this letter stood out from the many other replies you received to your advertisement, so my work will stand out from that of the ordinary correspondent."

Without reading another application, he dictated a request for the man to call—he was hired and "made good."

Some new scheme or some original presentation has secured many a position, interested many a prospect, saved many a campaign—sold millions of dollars worth of goods. A striking color-effect, a startling phrase or a peculiar design will jar the mental equilibrium of the busy man, catch his attention, and if the proposition is presented clearly and concisely it is reasonably certain to secure a hearing.

Many correspondents strive to flag the reader's attention before he opens the letter. An unusual size or color of envelope may be used or some catch line will save the letter from being dropped, unopened, into the waste basket.

The simplest scheme is often most effective. A plain white envelope with the one word "PERSONAL" typewritten in the lower left hand corner pulled nearly three times as many replies as the same letter, sent to a similar list, in envelopes containing the conventional return card.

The force of a scheme depends largely upon the class of prospects to whom one is writing. Such words as "IMPORTANT," "SPECIAL," "VALUABLE," and so forth, on an envelope would not even dent the curiosity of the average city business man, but many mail-order houses make constant use of these attention-getters and find them effective.

No general principles as to a catch phrase or other attention scheme can be laid down, except that it must appeal to the purse or to some other interest of the prospect. The manufacturer of office supplies printed down the left hand side of an envelope: "The Truth About Typewriter Ribbons" and on the second follow-up was this envelope-message: "FREE TRIAL OFFER. There's a post card enclosed which needs only your signature to get you the Best Ribbon made, FREE." Several thousand mail-order customers were lined up in this way—not through the scheme alone but by attracting attention and getting the prospect sufficiently interested to see what the proposition was.

Early in November one retailer sent out his monthly bulletin in an envelope that bore no printed matter except the picture of a turkey under which were the words, "Do You Want Me?" The question was coupled up with a letter-proposition which offered to give a turkey with the purchase of a certain amount of goods. No other selling "stunt" used by this dealer ever pulled more business, due, undoubtedly, to the appeal of tura-

key just before Thanksgiving and the way in which the attention-getter and the proposition were so intimately related.

A publishing house flagged the attention of the busy prospect with the warning at the top of an envelope: "This is Your Last Chance." At the bottom the line "October 25th is the limit" had been printed but added effectiveness was given by scratching out with a pen the "25th" and writing just above it the "31st." Changing the date by hand, giving the general statement a personal touch, succeeded in bringing the message home to many who had never been reached by previous propositions.

A picture is always an attention-arrester and a firm manufacturing trunks and suitcases printed on its envelopes a fine half-tone of a suitcase—nothing more. It tickled the curiosity of many who had not responded to previous letters. The manufacturer of expanded metal advertised his goods by the faint outline of a metal fence on his envelopes. Thousands of similar schemes have been used with varying degrees of effectiveness, for the success does not depend on the attention-getter so much as it does on the way the scheme is coupled up to proposition.

Such phrases as "Extra Special 10-day Offer" and "Grasp This Opportunity Today" appeal to mail-order customers but to catch the attention of the business man something more subtle must be used. Stamping on an envelope containing advertising matter the statement "This is in Answer to Your Inquiry" received consideration from many executives and department heads to whom such advertising seldom penetrates.

Some special color or tint often makes a letter stand out from the mass and a land company found by numerous tests that a rich bond paper of bluish tint pulled double the inquiries of the same letters sent on an ordinary grade of white paper. An eastern house, getting out an eighteen letter follow-up on a certain proposition, adopted an envelope with a wide red band around the edge. Letters were mailed once a week; after three months a mailing was skipped. Several hundred requests came in for copies of the missing letter, showing that the men on the list had come to look for the red-edged messenger every week and did not want to miss one. It was the letters that made the big impression but the color-effect *first flagged attention*.

A circular needs strengthening even more than a letter and a good "outside message" has proved the life line for many a

proposition. A soap manufacturer putting out a chipped soap threw its brand into the lime light by the question on its envelopes: "Why Buy Water?" The circular inside gave the chemical analysis of different brands of soap, showing the large percentage of water they contained as compared to this particular kind. It proved most effective advertising.

Any of these schemes used on the envelope can be applied to the letter itself. The catch-line at the top of the page is frequently effective and the chapter on "How to Begin a Business Letter" gave numerous examples of attention-forcing schemes. A clever phrase, a conspicuous signpost, an attractive picture—anything that will catch the eye is practical—provided it is not eccentric or offensive and has some relation to the subject matter.

A small sticker pasted on the letter is almost certain to be read and is good advertising at times. For instance, a manufacturer of motor boats uses a red sticker on all his letters a few weeks previous to the annual shows:

Look for the INDIAN MAID
at the MOTOR BOAT SHOWS
Chicago, Jan. 28 to Feb. 4
New Orleans, Feb. 22 to Mar. 1
Boston, March 12 to March 20

Although the letter may have some selling talk entirely irrelevant to the show, such an attention-getter is more apt to stimulate the interest and insure the reading of the message.

Another form of sticker was used by a publisher and broke all records in pulling business. A yellow slip, pasted on a blue letterhead read: "As you failed to enclose a remittance as called for in the advertisement, we are sending you descriptive literature only. Your orders will be promptly and carefully attended to at any time you favor us."

Another result-bringing scheme was a special letterhead, three inches longer than the regular size. The extra three inches were folded down as a flap at the top of the sheet, partly covering the letter. This message was printed on the flap:

"Last month I mailed you a copy of the attached letter. As we have not heard from you it is probable that the letter escaped your attention—that is the only explanation I can think of for your not accepting our free trial. I know you are interested and will thank me for bringing this to your attention in this way and so a copy of the original letter is given below."

The attached letter was filled with selling talk, and the replies showed that many men who had read it when first sent out, but who did not act, were induced by this attention-getter to read the offer again—and accepted it.

Printing the name and address or parts of the letter in red ink are familiar schemes, the effectiveness of which depends largely upon the way they couple up interest with strong arguments. In themselves, they have no selling value whatever.

While purely descriptive matter is usually left to circulars, it is sometimes used effectively with an attention-getting picture, especially one showing a machine in motion or an article in use. A revolver pointed at the reader from the top of a page, or a motorcycle rider coming from the page directly towards the reader undoubtedly attract attention, but there is a serious question whether the psychological effect of such a mental shock is desirable.

Folding the letter so that when it is pulled from the envelope the recipient's name is the only thing that meets his eye, is a sure attention-getter. An insurance man in a large city, who wanted above all to impress his name upon a large number of prospects, wrote a short letter which took up little more than half a page, ending it with the words "You will make no mistake if you"—a red line carried the eye to the bottom of the page where the sentence was completed—"Remember Mr. Blank." Such schemes are all right but the danger is in relying on the scheme to take the place of strong, convincing talking points.

Enclosures offer further opportunity for the man with a novel idea to express himself. Blotters, stuffers, folders, return envelopes or post cards—everything you send out can be made to carry a red flag. The effectiveness of mailing cards is due very largely to the attractive pictures, clever catch-lines and striking colors which arrest a man's interest long enough for him to read the proposition that is partly expressed by the illustration.

Anything new or different or larger or finer is sure to attract attention and advertising men all over the country are daily striving to outdo one another in clever ideas. But many campaigns have fallen flat because the originator depended on cleverness alone to turn the trick. Getting attention is obviously necessary, but a forceful style, convincing arguments, a specific offer and strong inducements are essential to catch up the momentary interest that the scheme arouses, develop it and lead it along logically to the completed sale.

Schemes That Are Used To Fix CONCENTRATION

PART IX SCHEMES THAT HAVE MADE LETTERS PULL CHAPTER 40

IT IS COMPARATIVELY *easy* to secure attention; the hard thing to do is to HOLD THAT ATTENTION—*fix* the concentration of the reader on your proposition. Catch phrases, sub-heads, color effects, pertinent questions, mechanical tricks of presentation, unique enclosures—innumerable schemes may be used to CONCENTRATE the attention of the reader on the letter and just such schemes as are described in this chapter have saved many a campaign from failure. But here is the point to remember: a scheme, no matter how clever, will not take the place of a CONVINCING letter; it will help to center attention on the message but it is not a substitute for arguments and persuasion

A YOUNG sales correspondent for an eastern watch manufacturer tried out a letter not long ago that brought unusually large returns. In making it up he used the same selling arguments and inducements that had been applied in a dozen other mailings. A careful study was made of it to discover why its “pulling power” was greater than that of other letters using the same general talking points.

By all the accepted rules it was far from an ideal letter; it was weak in several points. But it was original in one feature: the selling talk was preceded and followed by numerous catch lines that kept the reader's attention centered on the different points that were made. Such sentences as “This is an offer that

will make you sit up and take notice," "Do you get my idea—clearly?" "Read it over again—carefully." "Read on—this is going to be mighty interesting." "Just let me say that over again—it's so important to you," and "This is a one-sided offer—it doesn't touch your pocketbook" were so interspersed with the arguments that the rural prospects, to whom the letter was sent, became interested, unconsciously.

These catch-lines kept leading the reader along and proved just the thing to reach the class of men who buy watches by mail. "Cheap slang" that would have had the opposite effect on the city business man, actually won the country prospects, illustrating again the necessity of aiming your proposition at the class you want to reach. This inexperienced correspondent, coming from the country, used the phrases and sentences that appealed to him and they appealed to the men who had not been reached by more polished letters. The moral is plain: add to the arguments the hooks that will concentrate the reader's attention until he is brought up to the point of ordering.

The pulling power of a letter frequently depends upon some little scheme or idea that concentrates attention on the proposition. It is comparatively easy to gain attention; it is no great trick to get your letter opened and—the great majority of men will glance at the first paragraph—to grip the reader's interest in such a way that he will read your message to the end.

The two ideas—attention and concentration—are closely allied. Frequently they overlap one another. Concentration goes further, taking up the work of making the message effective after the attention-getting scheme has played its part and opened the way. Concentration schemes prompt consideration and reasoning. The scheme or plan itself is merely a vehicle for conveying the ideas and suggestions, yet without that vehicle many propositions would fail.

An eastern gear manufacturer succeeded in focusing the reader's attention on his proposition by means of an enclosure sent with all letters.

A gear punched through a celluloid card could be taken out and replaced. Around the gear—a red-inked word tangent to each tooth—were printed the names of the various kinds of gears manufactured. Here was a novelty that riveted attention to the company's line. The letter describing the company's goods was doubly effective by the concentration

132 MECHANICAL SCHEMES THAT DEVELOP INTEREST

Dear Sir:

Did you read of the unprecedented cold wave last week? It was the coldest weather the South has felt for many years, and it will mean the loss of millions--in the storm area.

But that's the very point I want to explain in this letter--our property lies out of the storm area. Our fruit was not touched. There has not been a sign of frost here--for, we're below the frost line. Look at the temperature map I'm sending you--you'll find that the thermometer has not once approached the freezing point this winter--even during last week's storms.

If you are interested just note the fact on the back of the enclosed temperature map. Slip it in the return addressed envelope and mail to us and we will send you one of our illustrated booklets telling all about the cultivation of grape fruit and oranges. This booklet also contains the government agricultural statistics on the value of fruit crops during the last five years.

This booklet is a veritable mine of valuable information for you if you are interested in southern land. But it's so expensive that we send it out only on application. I'll send you one with postage prepaid as soon as I receive your letter.

Very truly yours,

M. B. Andrews

President.

A dealer in Florida land, took advantage of an unusual storm to center attention on the favored location of his property. The temperature map helped to concentrate attention on the location of his land and proved one of the most effective pieces of advertising ever sent out

scheme which kept the idea of "gears" in the reader's mind. Factory men who were interested in the subject invariably read the accompanying letter. So a scheme by its very novelty and uniqueness may lead to concentration.

Another effective way of getting the prospect's thoughts into the desired channels is to ask a question in some original way. At the top of all the sales letters used by an eastern specialty house is printed in red ink the proverb, "Time is Money." An arrow line connects it with the opening sentence of the letter, "Do you believe this?" The next paragraph continues, "If you do, read this offer carefully—it shows you how to cash in on your time." Tests showed that this letter pulled nearly three times as well as one that was identical except for the first sentence, which read, "Do you believe that 'Time is money'?"

Dear Sir:

At the regular executive meeting yesterday a resolution was adopted limiting the time for which credit can be extended. This new ruling takes the matter out of my hands and fixes 60 days as the limit.

Now you will readily see that I have no personal authority in this matter--I am even exceeding my authority in telling you details of this meeting and the policy decided upon. But you are an old customer and I appreciate your business too much to allow any clouds to arise in our mutually pleasant relations. Where a neglected account might lead to the refusal of credit, I feel that I am warranted in straining a point to send you a copy of the resolution adopted.

I have been asked to make a report on all accounts by the 25th. Surely you won't force me to hand in yours as overdue at that time, after I've given you this information in plenty of time for you to avoid it? You don't want your name on our "refused credit" list and I'm certain I don't want to put it there. So won't you let me have your check before the 25th? Just strain a point if necessary. I'm doing the same for you.

Very truly yours,

Harry L. Pack

Credit Manager.

The enclosing of an extract from the minutes of the meeting, showing the resolution adopted, serves to concentrate the customer's mind on this one fact—that the bill must be paid or credit would be refused. To personal friends of the credit man, a pen and ink letter is even more effective. Asking the customer to return such a letter or to destroy it, adds force to the plan

This is an illustration of how some little mechanical trick can be utilized to catch the eye and speed up the reader's interest.

A Florida land salesman writing to a list of northern prospects in midwinter sets his readers thinking hard on his proposition by opening his letter in this way:

"The temperature was seventy-four here yesterday--how was the weather in Iowa?

"We had strawberries--picked from our own garden--for supper last night. Think of picking strawberries--and eating them--in winter. I'm going over to the beach tonight for a swim--been in swimming lately?"

The questions he asks call for a contrasting of the two climates: getting up in a cold house, building a fire and starting out to work while the mercury is playing tag with the zero mark—all this is brought into sharp contrast to a climate where men sit on their porches in their shirt sleeves, pick strawberries in their own garden and then go over to the beach for a swim. The writer takes advantage of the reader's physical discomfort on a cold day to help concentrate his attention on a southern land proposition.

Sometimes it is an advantage to summarize a proposition at the head of a letter. A western orchard company, owners and operators of commercial orchards, selling "units" to investors begins one of the letters of its follow-up in this way:

A SPECIAL LETTER - for - A SPECIAL PURPOSE

SUBJECT: This letter and Enclosures tell of a Special Preliminary Allotment of Units in Property No. 5, open only to our Present Correspondents.

The advantage gained by a lead of this kind is that of a bare statement of fact showing the idea back of the letter; this thought dominates the reader's mind. It connects the arguments to the main proposition. Then the actual introductory paragraph following the "Dear Sir" begins in some such way as this:

Business is fairly humming in our office, but we haven't heard from you yet, and if there is anything I hate to confess it is the failure to convince one of our correspondents that our letters are worth a reply. I don't blame you a bit, but in the face of our selling from 10 to 20 units a day, and on the eve of the greatest activity that the Northwest has ever experienced from a horticultural standpoint--I am searching my own mind to find wherein I have failed to convince you that the Apple industry is YOUR opportunity to make your money WORK HARDER FOR YOU.

In this paragraph the reader's interest is brought to a focus. The impression is subtly given that he will have cause to regret it if he does not read the letter through and learn just how the proposition would increase the earning capacity of his money.

Following the same idea a correspondence school runs the red-ink notice at the top of one of its follow-up letters:

"AN IMPORTANT CHANGE IN OUR LAW COURSE--A SPECIAL PROPOSITION THAT SHOULD INTEREST YOU. READ IT CAREFULLY."

Another follow-up has one letter with the capitalized headline, "ANOTHER WORD OF VITAL IMPORTANCE REGARDING NO. 6." Still another letter opens with this sentence:

"Read carefully every word of this letter unless you are in the habit of throwing away money."

A manufacturer leads the minds of prospective customers into his proposition in this way:

"Your success in business depends on the goods you handle and the way you sell to your trade—it is the same with us."

A candy manufacturer pulls his readers' attention off the prices and binds their interest on the point of superior quality with a suggestion of this sort:

"Don't look at our prices—look for quality in our candy. The finish and delicate flavor is way beyond competition or comparison. Therefore you can't compare prices justly."

The novelty of a letter sent out by a steel goods manufacturer caught attention and by its close application to the proposition made it a puller. The article sold was a doormat, and the sales letter opened with the sentence: "I wish to apply for a position in your office," giving personality to the doormat, and following this idea throughout. It was signed "Lightning Steel Doormat," and gave the company as guarantor of the applicant. Another letter sent out by this company which made a hit with the trade was opened with the sentence, "Here—Wipe your feet," for there were few men who wouldn't satisfy the curiosity aroused by such an opening and read the proposition that followed. Ordinarily this would be a mere attention-getter but in selling a door mat, the mind was instantly centered on the article itself.

Sub-heads for important arguments serve to emphasize certain features and keep the mind on the proposition. Under-scoring words or phrases that the writer wishes to impress upon the reader's memory is effective in fixing concentration if not

Dear Mr. Jones:-

So many repeat orders have come in from down state merchants on the catalogued new line of mercerized derby satin - art nouveau patterns in curtains and couch covers, that I believe they is the best selling this season. We have not been forced to put the sale because they are bargains of unusual merit.

While the demand will cover our stock I know you want a chance on the strong sellers and the opportunity of ordering some set and for you. Prices range between \$4.30 and \$4.75. It will be well for you to let us have any such notification within the next five days.

Very truly yours
J. L. Johnson - Pres

The hand written personal note is so rare in business correspondence that it always attracts attention. The average buyer of goods gets sacks of typewritten letters, but when he realizes that a busy executive—the head of a large wholesale house—has stopped his routine to write him a personal pen and ink note, his interest is immediately centered in the production. This scheme was tried successfully by a tapestry goods manufacturer to boost sales on certain lines of stock.

carried to an extreme. Running certain words in red ink when the remainder of the letter is in black or purple, underlining in red ink, making special indentation of certain paragraphs and tabulated figures, all serve the same purpose. But do not be led into the error of thinking that some such scheme is sufficient to make a letter effective. At the most, it can only help out the arguments and talking points.

The letter of a tire and rubber manufacturer, written entirely in dark-colored ink, has red quotation marks about two words in the center of the page, which are the key-note of the proposition. It is a striking detail, certain of drawing attention and giving unusual emphasis, and it is effective because it is not overdone.

A publishing house fixes concentration on a special proposition by the words "Forty cents a copy for fifteen days" put on by a rubber stamp in another color of ink diagonally across the last two paragraphs of the letter. Another sales letter writer gets a forceful vehicle for a special offer by writing it with pen and ink across the bottom of the typewritten letter.

Stamped on the letter paper of a concern which aims to emphasize the idea of service, is a jagged red streak of lightning which ends in the lower left hand corner with the words "Lightning Service." Down in the left hand corner of a plow manufacturer's letter is the picture of a man with hand extended and three red lines running up across the page. At the side of the picture is the red-typed explanation, "These lines lead to the friendly cooperation of our customers and make us grow." The lines lead to paragraph sub-headings: "Factory Prices with Freight Prepaid," "We have no agents but sell direct to you" and "30 days' Free Trial with a Guarantee of Satisfaction." This scheme is adopted in the letters purely to concentrate the reader's attention on the three policies.

Another manufacturer selling engines aims to bring concentration down to details by a strong color contrast in an enclosure with his letter. The cover of the enclosure is in bright red, the background of a photograph a cream white and the machine itself in dark brown. The scheme is an unusually striking one and has been one of the most productive ever applied to the sales letters of this concern. Unusual color contrasts are always striking and, if so applied to the selling plan as to make the point of emphasis the dominating feature, help to fix concentration.

An enclosure used by a clothing manufacturer in his letters impresses upon consumers the name and address of the local dealer. The enclosure is a card of introduction neatly engraved on fine bond paper: "This will introduce you to our representative in your city." Underneath this line is a space in which the name of the dealer and his address is written. Below this is a printed assurance that the dealer will be glad to show the consumer the line of goods and new fashion ideas.

Dear Sir:

There are no better engravings made than those of the Powers-Miller Company and THERE AREN'T GOING TO BE.

The average halftone of today when placed under a magnifying glass shows raggedness in the dots--the average etching shows raggedness and shallowness--the usual halftones do not electrotypes well. Is it a wonder when you compare the patterns of the old style with the new process?

Our new acid etching process means a revolution in the photo engraving business. It gets far deeper and cleaner halftones--softer and more accurate middle tones; is better by 100 per cent for electrotyping and stereotyping; gives 50 per cent longer runs; necessitates less make ready, to say nothing of the immeasurably superior quality of zinc etchings than any old method. Compare the magnified reproductions on the margin and see the modulation and perfect smoothness of the dots in one of our etchings; mark the smoothness and depth of the etching made by our process--then see the perfect uniformity of one of our electrotypes.

We've enclosed a "Dun's Report" of ourselves and our reputation. It shows us as our customers see us.

We have just made up a few sample books, showing designs, color schemes, half-tones, double-tones and attractive results secured for other customers. Don't you want to look it over? We will send you a copy immediately upon receipt of the enclosed postcard with your corrected address.

Very truly yours,

POWERS-MILLER COMPANY.

Several schemes, each emphasizing a point of advantage, may often be applied to a selling letter. An engraving concern uses three in one letter: a catch phrase in the opening paragraph to bring out an immediate idea of superiority of product; a series of illustrations in the margin of the letter to concentrate interest in the argument and add convincing power, and an enclosure of a reproduction of financial agency's report to impress the reader in this unusual way with the stability and standing of the house

Attention and interest may be centered on some special offer by a printed or typewritten slip pasted to the margin and partly covering the letter. A novelty cutlery concern employed this plan effectively by the use of a narrow colored strip on which a special discount offer was written.

A scheme successfully employed by a commercial orchard concern adds a touch of originality to the form letter which follows the inquiry and draws the attention of the prospect to

Dear Sir:

IF OUR DESCRIPTIVE MATTER HAS NOT CONVINCED YOU THAT OUR LOOSE LEAF METHODS ARE SUPERIOR TO ALL OTHER SYSTEMS, THE FAULT IS WITH OUR PRINTED MATTER, AND NOT WITH OUR METHODS.

Seventy years is a long time--but we have spent that many years inventing and improving office methods--that we might say, "There's none better." You might send for one of our special introductory outfits--to look over and try. It will convince you more thoroughly of their superiority than anything we can write.

There are probably many things in connection with your business that it would pay you to know more about--things that you really want to know all about. Surely, you won't hesitate to ask about them--if you can get the information readily--without waste of time or money.

It isn't going to cost you anything for the trial of our methods; we are anxious to prove to you that they are best--we will do it just as soon as you tell us for what purpose you want to use them. There's a return addressed card enclosed which you can fill out without incurring the least obligation. You might tell your stenographer to mail it this morning.

Very truly yours,

Hatchell Bros.

A manufacturer of loose leaf systems concentrates his reader's attention to the point of superior methods, by distinguishing one letter of his follow-up from others. He begins the letter with a strong interest getting sentence bearing directly on the letter message, and to give the thought more force this sentence is set in capitals

future personal treatment. It was accomplished by using this printed slip attached to the margin of the letter:

This is a form letter written by me personally, which I'm sending in reply to your inquiry and to accompany the printed matter. All correspondence from the day I receive your reply will be of a personal nature, and I'll expect to write the first letter of this kind, answering such questions as you want cleared up, within the next few days.

The actual value of such little schemes to the sales letter has been proved by many try-outs. Very often some little plan or idea when applied to the letter itself focuses attention so forcibly upon a proposition that its effectiveness is doubled or tripled. It is the little hooks that catch attention and hold it that give full pulling power to the selling letter.

The INDUCEMENT That Brings The Order

PART IX SCHEMES THAT HAVE MADE LETTERS PULL CHAPTER 41

IT IS OBVIOUS *that the first aim of the mail-order correspondent is to attract attention to his proposition—just as obviously he must try to concentrate the prospect's attention on it—but those steps are preliminary—wasted time, energy and postage, unless they are followed with an INDUCEMENT that will BRING BACK AN ORDER. Whether the prospect is in the market for a lead pencil or a yacht there is some special inducement that can be brought forward at the psychological moment to TIP THE SCALES IN FAVOR OF YOUR PRODUCT. This chapter describes inducement schemes that have pulled—little twists to a proposition, and special concessions that have saved a number of mail-order campaigns*

THE manufacturer of a cream separator, while looking over his mailing list recently, found a number of prospects whose orders were hanging fire. That they were interested was shown by inquiries and replies to the follow-up letters. But the proposition had not been put to them from an angle that landed their orders—that final word of persuasion which would take their names from the “unsold” file was lacking.

Some additional argument was necessary so a new offer was mailed out: “Let us send you the separator for a two weeks trial, and during that time you can prove to your own satisfaction the big saving it is going to bring you. After you've gathered the cream in the usual way, run the skimmed milk through the

separator—keep track of the additional cream and see how much butter it produces each week. Multiply this by four and you'll find that the month's average saving will pay one-fifth the cost of the separator."

Here was a money-making appeal that was worth testing out—it was fair; it cost nothing. Farmers who were unmoved by other letters were induced to put their names on an order blank by this specific clear-cut trial offer.

No product is marketed without an inducement—some argument that shows its adaptability to the needs of the prospect or some persuasion that creates in his mind the desire to possess it.

This principle applies just the same to sales letters as to personal solicitation. To clinch the order by mail, the letter must offer an inducement. There may be several different inducements, for that which is effective in one case may not pull with a different class or for another proposition. So a series of follow-up letters should be used, each offering a different inducement, one of which may strike the chord that will bring the prospect into action and clinch his order.

Price is usually the strongest inducement. Give the prospect reason to believe that he is getting a particularly good bargain and the sale is half made. A correspondence school selling a \$20 course, once a year offers a special inducement to lagging prospects in the form of a \$10 certificate redeemable during a limited period as half payment of the course. The reason given for the unusual offer is the formation of a class of one hundred students, which permits a reduction in price. Cost is lower in handling that number of students on any one course. Such cash reductions as this, unless a sufficient reason is given for the cut, have the wrong effect—they lessen the value of the proposition in the eyes of the prospect and defeat the desired ends. A better plan is followed by another correspondence school, which offers to give the course upon payment of half the regular price, the balance to be paid by the student out of his increased earnings after the course is finished.

A common form of inducement especially applicable to mechanical devices and labor-saving appliances is to require only a small down payment and then "let the machine pay for itself by the money it saves." One manufacturer lopped off ten per cent because of the expense saved by taking salesmen out of the field and selling direct. Another manufacturer gave

Dear Sir:

Tramping through the Detroit Sifter factory recently, one of our experts on reducing power loss noticed a lack of alignment in the shafting that explained a difficulty the owner had been attempting to solve for years--there was heavy friction evidenced throughout the entire length.

He made an investigation that brought out some startling facts. Running free, the main shaft could not be moved except with the aid of a turning bar. A further investigation showed nearly every length of shafting in the factory working under an equal handicap. With over twenty sections of shafting, covering about 500 feet, figure for yourself the power that was going to waste in this plant.

Acting upon his advice the main shaft--100 feet long--was equipped with our Roller Bearings. The owner, Mr. A. P. Jones, tried the 100 foot shaft after the new bearings were installed and readily turned it by hand. A week ago we completed installing Roller Bearings throughout the factory. He estimates that friction loss has been reduced over thirty per cent in belting wear--in fuel--in efficiency.

Try the same experiment on your own shafts--you'll discover a similar friction loss. Estimate, with the experience of Mr. Jones as a basis of comparison, the power you are wasting every month in your factory. Figure it out carefully--you will see that the money you invest in equipping your factory throughout with Roller Bearings will return nearly 100 per cent interest. You surely won't continue to neglect this big leakage.

Write us, this morning--giving the amount of shafting and we will submit an estimate within twenty-four hours. For convenience, use the enclosed card.

Very truly yours,

Adams & Adams

A big inducement to order goods is to point out the waste that an antiquated system is causing. Where a manufacturer offers to install new equipment on trial to demonstrate the saving, the inducement pulls orders that academic arguments would seldom land

a reverse twist to this same idea and used as an "order now" inducement the argument that the price was to be advanced ten per cent to cover the additional selling cost of personal salesmen who were to be put into the field the following month.

Another familiar inducement is a discount for a limited time, provided the purchaser sends in with his order the names

Dear Sir:

Here are just a few of the many reasons why you ought to plan on getting the Handy Pump Engine now, before the spring and summer seasons begin:

With an air head on the pump the engine will throw water over a forty-foot barn or house--that means fire protection for you and you know how small a chance the average man has of saving a building afire in the country. It throws sixty feet on the level easily--so you can readily water your lawn or garden. You remember last spring and summer, gardens and lawns fairly burned up from lack of water. Then there's all your carriages that must be washed--it's a simple task with the aid of the Handy Pump.

You can take the engine from the pump platform in ten minutes--and as it weighs only a hundred pounds--wheel it anywhere, adjust it quickly and set it at the work a man must usually do. It will run the big separator, the churn, the washing machine--any of the things that are usually back-breakers.

The price is \$70 f. o. b. your town. But I'm going to make you a special offer for just this month, because there are so many of your friends who are as interested as you. I'm going to offer you the exclusive agency for your vicinity and you therefore can secure a Handy Pump Engine for your own use at a greatly reduced price. As our agent you will have \$15.00 off. This means that you'll not only get the agent's profit on your own engine but you can doubtless sell enough others to pay the entire cost of your own.

You can't afford to delay a minute longer--for if you are not appointed agent, someone else will be. Better send your order now and pay for your engine through sales to your neighbors.

Very truly yours,

Morton & Morton

This manufacturer of engines employs several inducements. He uses advantages and convenience as one, a special selling price as a second, an exclusive agency, with possible profits from sales, as a third, and a time limit as a fourth. Such an offer, when bona fide, is a powerful inducement

of five other prospects. In addition, a small commission may be offered the purchaser on sales made to prospects whose names he has turned over.

Sometimes several offers, played from different angles, furnish the price inducement sufficient to meet various selling conditions. A watch manufacturer, for instance, offers in one letter to sell for cash, with a watch fob as a present; the second

Dear Sir:

The price of our 3x6' and 3x7' display fixtures for wall papers is now \$8.00 each, just as we told you it would be after February 1st.

We have, however, a few 3x6' wings on hand which we will let go at \$6.00 each, as long as they last. An order blank is enclosed. You will notice that it is dated March 1st as we cannot promise deliveries even on these extra. at this price after that time.

Very truly yours,

WORLD MANUFACTURING CO.

Notice of an advance in price and offering one last chance at the former price is usually an effective inducement. A fixture manufacturer limited an offer of this kind, to emphasize the importance of the time element and this hurried along many a lagging order

letter offers to send the watch upon payment of half the purchase price, and the balance after a thirty days' trial; the third inducement is to sell on instalments at a slightly higher price because of the convenience of buying in this way.

When the special cut price or discount is not sufficient inducement this may be made more effective by offering it in some attractive way. A western concern increased its sales over fifty per cent by making each prospect think himself especially favored by the cut price. Suggestions for the best selling name for several new articles were asked for in advertisements and prizes were offered for the best ideas. A ten per cent discount coupon was promised to those receiving honorable mention.

Those who did not win prizes received an attractively engraved card of "Honorary Mention," and the ten per cent coupon was enclosed with it. As the coupon was limited to thirty days it proved an inducement that broke all records in pulling orders.

Premiums, when offered with a proposition that has merit, aid in bringing the sale to a close. The inducement of a large soap manufacturer, selling direct, is to offer prizes equal in value to the goods purchased. Each prospect is furnished with a list of premiums to select from. A letter explains that this offer is made possible through the selling plan which, according to the manufacturer, is to cut out the middleman and give his profits to the consumer in the form of premiums.

General mail-order houses sometimes pay a prospect to try their goods, on the theory that the trial-order customer can usually be easily held. A New York house sends a check for one dollar with the second letter of its follow-up, instructing the person receiving it to enclose this as part payment on the first order sent in, explaining at the same time:

"It costs us nearly a dollar for the literature and advertising we must use to convince our prospective buyer of the benefits they gain through trading with us. We believe it a more effective method of advertising to give you this money and let you actually see and use the goods. Then you are certain to be convinced."

To induce the purchase of a mechanical specialty on a cash basis, doubters and other prospects who lack faith in the proposition, receive a special letter from the head of one mail-order company, suggesting that they make use of a "Certificate of Deposit." This is merely a slip supplied them which must be deposited with the payment for the article at their local bank until they have had an opportunity to examine or to try the machine. In this way their money is kept in the local bank and in case of any dissatisfaction, is refunded to them according to the bank instructions on the slip.

As an inducement through which to pull renewals from old subscribers, a publisher writes:

"We are going to raise the yearly subscription price on the 15th, but before that time I'm going to give you the chance to renew at the old rate. And this privilege extends to a six years' subscription--think of the saving to you if you order now before the rate is changed. I'm making this offer because I know that no new subscriber can quite take the place of an old one; because I want to be sure you are on the list next year, and because I want to reciprocate for the part you have played in our present success by giving you a share of it."

The idea of money-saving and giving the prospect an opportunity to get in at the special rate, makes the strongest kind of an inducement.

To play up the importance of the prospect's interests in the contemplated purchase, and thus add persuasive power to the

Dear Sir:

Will you accept a free loan of my new model farm Tool Grinder for the next ten days?

Will you take my grinder home to your farm and sharpen every tool you have on your place, without sending me a single penny or in the least obligating yourself to pay me a cent? All I ask is the permission to send it to you for a free trial--to let you examine and test it. If you don't like it you can return it at our expense at the end of ten days.

You always have some tool that needs sharpening--a scythe--an axe--corn knives--fodder blades--mowing machine knives--butcher knives--any of the tools you use every day. My Grinder sharpens them in a jiffy--with the least work and the most convenience. It's always ready. You sit in the saddle, work the pedals with your feet and apply the tool to be sharpened. It doesn't need a boy to turn an awkward handle. Then it's so simple to operate that a woman can use it.

I'm sending you a little booklet telling how to grind edged tools. You'll want to read it carefully. It also tells all about my grinder and why it is better than any machine of its kind ever manufactured. It has been improved wonderfully in the last two years--and saves so much time and inconvenience that over 6,000 farmers have ordered them in the past nine months. They have sold so rapidly that in a few weeks we'll be compelled to stop sending them out on trial. The factory capacity will soon be taxed so heavily your request for a free trial will either have to await its turn or be refused entirely. For such liberal terms can't be allowed much longer.

Better have us ship you one in a few days to try out. A request blank is attached to the back of the booklet. Rip it off, fill in the space and mail it as soon as you've looked over the booklet.

Very truly yours,

M. B. Andrews.

The special trial offer for a short time only is one of the most effective inducements. This letter pulled in many slow orders for the proposition is fair and the necessity for prompt action rings true

selling campaign, a piano manufacturer sends as the third mailing in his follow-up a blank telegram, filled out in this way: "Please reserve Piano Number — or, if sold, Number — second choice. Letter follows." A printed slip accompanying the telegram states, "To minimize the chance of disappointment, fill out and sign this telegram as soon as this letter reaches you. Send it at our expense—we pay for the message. Fill in your

Dear Madam:

Where you live I know you must find it almost impossible to buy really good ocean fish. And appetizing sea food--something you can really relish--is just what you want.

You can't get such quality and variety anywhere else on earth as you can from us. What would it mean to you to be able to come down to the wharf tomorrow morning and select just such choice fish as you want? I'm going to offer substantially that very opportunity. We can pack up for you any of the finest varieties we have here and I will put them in your house without a cent of expense to you--I will send you an assortment of our products on approval. You can see them--eat up a fair amount of them--and then decide within a month whether to send your check or return the balance at our expense.

They won't come C. O. D. as I want you to taste them--to take your own time to decide. I do not ask for any references as I already know your responsibility. I just want you to have the advantages of living close to the sea--and to try our goods on terms that insure you against any chance of loss. For such goods our prices are very low--we only sell to families, not through dealers: so you get the dealer's commission.

It is a very liberal offer. Can you afford not to try our foods on such terms as these? If you do lay this aside now you will be as much the loser as we will. Turn to the enclosed folder now and decide while the offer is in your mind. Send as small an order as you wish and I will give it my personal attention. What shall we send?

Very truly yours,

ATLANTIC SEA FOOD COMPANY.

By *M. D. Williams*

Sales Manager.

The argument of convenience and unusually liberal terms is a strong inducement. A sea food company, selling by mail to consumers, first carefully selects lists of householders and then offers to send on approval

address as well as specifying the first and second choice." This scheme has proved most effective in closing the sale, provided there is some plausible reason for quick action, such as a special price or a limited number of articles.

Then the strongest inducement may be offering some special service in connection with a sale, such as the preparation of plans and specifications or assistance in installing and operating equipment. An offer to furnish an expert operator

has been the inducement that closed the sale on many a mechanical device. The offer of land companies to set out fruit trees and care for them until they reach a bearing stage has sold thousands of acres that purchasers would never have considered without this service inducement.

With certain classes the quality argument is strongest and some firms use the guarantee as an inducement. One firm makes reference in all its letters to the guarantee but in the fifth letter this is made the talking point. An elaborate certificate, filled out with the prospect's name written in and a specific agreement, in legal phraseology, to take the article back if it proves unsatisfactory and to refund the purchase price, pulls orders when other inducements have fallen flat.

Making it easy to order is frequently an influence that pulls the prospect's interest over the dead center of inaction. The enclosing of order blanks that need only a few pencil or ink marks and a signature in filling out; the self-addressed envelope and instructions on how to order have a magnet force.

But the special proposition, no matter from what angle it is presented, must be explained by a sufficient reason or it may bring suspicion upon a meritorious offer.

The introductory offer is the most familiar excuse for a cut in price and it is a perfectly legitimate one if honestly used, for in many lines a new firm must make some concessions to get its products into use. But when the introductory offer is merely a catch-penny scheme, it is not an inducement but merely sharp practice that will some day react on the house.

In making an inducement, the correspondent must treat his prospect honestly or sooner or later the deception will come home to roost. No concern that seeks to establish a permanent trade can afford to put forth inducements that will not hold color. While it is the mark of the successful correspondent to think up new appeals and stronger inducements, they must come into alignment with accepted standards of business or the reaction will be greater than the temporary gain.

Schemes That Will INDUCE A Reply

PART IX SCHEMES THAT HAVE MADE LETTERS PULL CHAPTER 42

THE MORE ACCURATELY *a letter is aimed at the particular needs of a prospect, the more certain it is to lead up to an order. To find the range it is* **FIRST NECESSARY TO DRAW FIRE**—*to get a reply that will show where the prospect lives and tell something of him. It makes little difference what he writes, the astute correspondent can read between the lines enough to fill out the picture and frame a letter that will* **COUPLE up his PRODUCT with the PROSPECT'S WANTS.** *So the clever correspondent racks his brains for schemes that will induce Mr. Prospect to reply, and this chapter reproduces letters and describes schemes that have proved effective in getting a reply*

A **MANUFACTURER** of farm implements discovered that by enclosing in his first letter a special offer, which aimed not to sell goods but to get replies, he could often get a line on prospects and find out at once whether or not he was warranted in going after their business.

By guaranteeing a large number of subscriptions and by promising valuable publicity, he secured a low rate from two farm magazines. To every prospect he offered a choice of subscriptions to these publications for twenty-five cents. asking in return that the application be made through his company and that the applicant fill out a blank form card showing his correct address, the size of his farm and his principal product.

Since the majority of farmers to whom he wrote wanted a farm paper, the unusually low rate pulled immediate answers. At the same time the charge was enough to shut out the curiosity seekers. This gave the manufacturer a select list of prospects and provided the key that opened a way to sales by showing what kind of machine each prospect needed most.

All this was accomplished in the first letter. After figuring up the time and money previously wasted on "dead timber", this manufacturer found that his replies were costing him considerably less than before. The plan reduced the average cost twenty-one cents a prospect.

The obvious reason in getting a reply from an indefinite prospect, is to find out if he is interested in the proposition. The letter that goes after it is but a "feeler"—its purpose is to draw fire—find out who the live prospects are.

As in the scheme adopted by this implement manufacturer, it may aim merely to select the list and secure some line on the arguments that are most likely to produce results. Or, it may be necessary to know whether it will be profitable to mail expensive booklets or to send out salesmen. Often the prospect may need more information and his reply will suggest the course of treatment necessary to get his order. The field general in the sales campaign wants to know the most effective approach—the prospect's reply gives him this information.

But the reply may indicate that the prospect is not ready for the letter campaign—he may not be in the market just at that time—in which case the follow-up would be wasted; or, it may show that while not interested in the particular proposition or in the market for the product offered, he may want some other article; or, possibly, the reply may point out defects in the product or selling letters that should be remedied to avoid useless expense. A criticism, even from a prospect who is not in the market, may show the necessity for an entirely new argument.

To draw this first spark of interest is often the first object of a letter campaign.

One specialty mail-order house encloses with the first letters a small slip of paper on which is written, "The courtesy of an immediate reply is requested." This note is signed by the manager or some officer and has proved most effective, especially when used in letters to farmers and small town prospects. Another mail-order man drew a surprisingly large number of replies

Dear Sir:

I feel that possibly a few plain figures might interest you in our orange and fig orchards in Texas, about which I have written you several times:

A five acre orchard will cost you \$2,000
which may be paid as follows:-

Cash, 300
\$29 monthly, without interest, until paid . . . 1,700

Or if you prefer, we will make four equal
annual payments at 7% interest.

After the orchard has reached the bearing
period, it should produce

First year	\$ 1,000
Second year	1,500
Third year	2,000
Fourth year	2,500
Fifth year	3,000
Sixth year	3,500

Total, \$13,500

These figures are the MINIMUM.

From your investment of \$ 2,000
you have had at the end of ten years . . . 13,500

Thereafter your income should be not less than

\$3,000 to \$5,000 annually, and you have
a property that has increased in value
to at least \$2,000 per acre, or . . . \$10,000

Study these figures; then advise me if I may not have
an opportunity to prove them. If I can, would you make an invest-
ment on the easy terms named?

Very truly yours,

W. O. Williams

Pres. The Star Development Co.

Sometimes it is advisable to hold the proof of statements that are made, until the prospect has shown enough interest to demand it. A fifth follow-up put out by an orchard company, having orange and fig orchards in Texas, gave certain figures on future profits, together with the statement that proof would be furnished to those interested. This method of courting a reply proved very profitable, a large number of inquiries coming in from prospects who before had failed to show interest.

by writing in red ink on the outside of the envelope, "Replies to this letter will be accepted if postmarked within ten days." When the proposition is one that apparently demands immediate

Dear Sir:

Evidently you failed to receive our letter of recent date--for if you had read it carefully you could hardly have failed to reply--so we are enclosing a copy. There are several points included in it that are very important to you.

In case the terms are not absolutely clear, we want to point out that the discount of 33 1/3 per cent on all orders for less than ten machines, and 40 per cent on orders of ten or more, is unusually liberal. You surely can sell an average of one machine a day--figure this out yourself and see how large a salary you would be getting. Then don't overlook the guarantee which allows a money refund should your sample machine prove in any way unsatisfactory within ten days.

As you know, we cannot make these prices to any but the first agent who introduces our machines in a locality. Let us hear from you by return mail in regard to your taking the agency. Ask us any questions that have occurred to you in this matter, and we will send you some valuable selling hints along with our reply, but we will not hold the territory unless you accept immediately.

Very truly yours,

WESTERN TYPEWRITER CO.

A typewriter concern introducing machines into new territories adopted this plan of getting new orders promptly. The writer did not fall into the common error of telling the prospect that others were waiting to accept the agency but that the house would not hold open the territory—a reasonable proposition that appeals to the average business man

attention, such a scheme as this usually calls forth a quick reply.

If no response is heard from a prospect within a reasonable time after sending him a catalogue or booklet, some firms send out tracers to see if the advertising matter was received. One house, for example, has a form post card with the word "Tracer" at the top and under it this message:

"The book we mailed you in reply to your request, was a valuable one. We are very anxious to see that it does not go astray and to trace it in case you did not receive it. Just make a note on the attached return post card and mail to us today so we may know if the catalogue is in your possession."

Experience shows that the great majority of people are so impressed by this card that they comply with the request and usually their reply gives the house the desired information.

Dear Sir:

I want to ask a favor of you.

While I realize that you may not be willing to grant it --I believe you are willing to help any brother business man out of a tight place, if it does not especially inconvenience you or cost you anything.

Recently, as you remember, I sent you one of our large carriage catalogues for your inspection. Since that time a fire at our factory destroyed all the literature we had on hand. Temporarily, we are unable to get more catalogues from our printers while we are daily receiving urgent requests for them. Unless it is possible to secure a few from inquirers who have received them and do not care to order right away we must lose a great deal of business.

Since I have not heard from you I assume you are not interested and will be willing to return at my expense the one you hold. I will appreciate this favor from you and to make it easy for you, have enclosed an addressed and stamped folder. However, if you still are interested in getting a carriage, keep the booklet--I do not want you to send it in if you are thinking about buying. I also enclose a return post card in case you want to ask any questions regarding a prospective purchase.

Please favor me with a reply, at least--letting us know whether to expect a catalogue or a later order. The world is large--not so large but that I may be able to return the favor at some future time.

Very truly yours,

S. L. Lawrence

President.

A manufacturer of carriages, wishing to replace some destroyed catalogues to use until he could procure more from his printers, wrote to inquirers asking for the return of books sent to them--if not interested. Accidentally, he hit upon one of the most effective inducements to reply that has ever been used in a follow-up letter. The same idea was later incorporated in similar schemes with remarkable success

The special rate to the first one ordering some commodity in a town or county frequently induces prompt action, but such propositions are so often spurious--catch-penny schemes open to all--that the better class of houses seldom adopt this plan.

The drawing power of curiosity is generally recognized. Incite the prospect's curiosity in the first selling letter and he is almost certain to come back for more information, but one must guard against attracting the idle curious on whom your

Dear Sir:

There must be something the matter with my letters or else I have failed to understand your needs.

I am sure the fault is not in the machine. Others in your line are using the Atlas Time Recorder with unusual success. More than fifty per cent of the sales we make are re-orders. They come from concerns that have proved the efficiency of the machine and are placing them in other departments. I have tried in my letters to show you how it will be an equal help in your business.

Won't you please send me just a line telling why the Atlas Time Recorder has not appealed to you as you thought it would? I have enclosed a return stamped envelope for your convenience.

Very truly yours,

Wallace E. Lee

When several letters in the follow-up have failed to get a reply from the prospect who has made an inquiry, a straightforward request for some sort of an explanation on the grounds that the letter writer hopes to be of service to the inquirer by giving such information as may be wanted, is often productive of results. This short note, which followed four selling letters, brought in a large percentage of replies and outlined the prospects' needs, enabling the company to give them individual attention

literature would be wasted. A publishing house looking for book salesmen hung out this interest-teaser in its first letter to a list of country school teachers:

"While we understand that you already are either engaged to teach school or otherwise profitably employed, we want to show you the way to increase your earning capacity away beyond what any teaching position can ever offer you. A word from you to show that you are sincere in your wish to build up a profit-making business for yourself, and we will give you our complete plan with the proof of its money-making possibilities."

By assuming that the prospect was employed and by implying that the opening was good enough to warrant giving up a position, the letter held an unusual appeal to the man who really was out of employment or occupying a low-salaried position and it flooded the publisher with replies.

Such schemes, little clinchers and hooks in a carefully worked out plan, with its appealing inducement, drag forth this connecting link in the seller's chain of information.

The Proposition Used As A LAST RESORT

PART IX SCHEMES THAT HAVE MADE LETTERS PULL CHAPTER 43

IT IS ONE THING *to get a prospect interested and another thing to heat his interest to the ordering point. The correspondent's hardest work is to get action into the "almost persuaded" prospects—the people who are fully determined to buy sometime but keep putting it off. With most propositions there comes a time when it is no longer profitable to follow-up a lagging buyer—the margin of profit on the article puts a limit on the selling expense—and so one FINAL EFFORT IS MADE—ONE LAST INDUCEMENT offered to get the order. Here are letters and last resort schemes that have pulled orders out of the fire, made eleventh-hour sales and enabled the house to cash in on the expense of the follow-up*

RECENTLY a manufacturer of gas engines who anticipated moving his plant into larger quarters, decided to dispose of all his stock that was ready for the market, at a reduced price. The change necessitated freighting a large number of engines twenty miles and this meant double carting costs, crating and uncrating and possible damage in handling.

A special list of possible buyers was selected, some who had written for special information and others whose orders were hanging fire for various reasons.

To these a "one-last-inducement" letter was written. It summed up briefly the engine's strong features and then offered to cut the list price twenty per cent, explaining that the company

would rather sell at the cut rate than move the stock. A photograph of the engine was enclosed and under it was stamped an absolute guarantee and a fifteen-day free trial offer. It puts the offer in this way:

"Because it is advisable to dispose of all the stock on hand rather than move it to the new factory, we will let you try a Reliable thoroughly--absolutely without cost to you or obligation on your part. So you won't have to take our word regarding the advantages in the Reliable--you can test it and if you don't find that it does more than we claim for it, you may send it back at our expense.

"And the price--just for eighteen days--is 20% off. Can you afford to let such an offer go by? There will never be another better offer--I don't believe there ever was a more liberal one. Fill out the blank enclosed and mail it now--before you have lost the chance. We move the factory on the 25th and we would prefer to have your order a day or two in advance."

Most of the engines in stock were sold. This sale suggested to this manufacturer that for a last resort a definite plan must be followed—a good excuse provided for the special offer.

The prospect must be impressed in some forcible manner with the fact that there is to be no better proposition—no lower price—no easier terms—that it is his one last chance to accept an unusually advantageous proposition. This principle holds good on any article sold through letters. Sometimes a prospective buyer holds off, hoping that he will get a better offer—often he is hanging back merely for lack of some special incentive to "order now"—many times he is undecided as to kind or size or style—maybe he is not convinced that he really needs the article or wants to pay the price. All these obstacles the seller aims to overcome in his last appeal. The quick disposal letter sent out by this engine manufacturer held the elements of an effective last resort scheme, even though it was not planned with that idea in mind. It gave an unusual inducement and, what was equally important, showed a legitimate excuse for the special offer and a good reason why it would not be repeated.

Correspondence schools frequently cut the price in a last resort letter, but this always has the disadvantage of cheapening the value of the course, and the cut, becoming known, makes a sore spot with students who paid full price. A last resort letter

Dear Sir

Here is your folder taken directly from our files and it contains copies of all the letters I have written you about the Model XX incubators. Possibly you may want to refresh your memory about certain points and this will give you an opportunity--but if you are not interested, just destroy the folder for if you have no notion of buying at this time we don't want to bother you with any more letters.

I had a letter this morning from a man in Michigan who thanked me for having been so persistent--said he had intended to order but kept putting it off from week to week. Finally he sent in his order and now, just after his first hatch, he writes such an enthusiastic letter that I am enclosing a copy of it.

This is a common experience and I haven't the least doubt you will thank me after you have bought.

Now, before throwing this folder away, won't you look the letters over once more? Read especially the letter of Jan. 4th and the figures quoted in the letter of Jan. 12th and the third paragraph in the letter of Jan. 22nd. Read all the correspondence over again and then if you want to try a Model XX, merely sign the enclosed card and mail to us.

Very truly yours,

BROWN INCUBATOR COMPANY,

By *Edward Brown*

While the last resort letter is frequently used in campaign follow-ups it may also be used on the wear-out. If a prospect has not responded in any way it may be desirable to center one final shot on him and if he does not respond, take his name from the file. The profit on a sale may not justify a longer campaign--and a heavier selling expense. This was the idea behind the letter given above. Here there was no special price or other specific inducement but it was a last resort, the final word--and the cleverness of the scheme of sending the prospect a manila folder containing copies of all the correspondence gave him a new perspective of the entire proposition and brought many more orders than an actual price reduction

can offer an inducement that does not have any of the disagreeable features of the "bargain counter" cut price by making better terms such as a small payment and the balance in instalments, or the scheme described in a previous chapter where a student was admitted to a class at a lower price.

A mail-order manufacturer of a specialty holds in reserve the free trial offer until the last thing. This final letter pulls by the suggestion that, while the prospect ought to be convinced of the

Dear Sir:

I have just telegraphed you as follows:

"Our peach and apple orchards uninjured by recent terrible storms. Unusually large crop assured. High prices certain on account of crop failure elsewhere. We therefore reserve right to increase price of land or withdraw former offers after fifteen days without notice. Wire amount reservation collect."

In confirmation of that wire I enclose copies of four telegrams which just passed between our Chicago office and our western manager. For fifteen days only we will allow the present offer to remain in effect, after which date we will take such action as we believe justifiable. Prices are bound to rise after that date and it is possible that after July 11th the land will be held back temporarily.

We are holding twenty acres awaiting your orders, previous to that date; the price quoted you to hold good until then.

Very truly yours,

GOLDEN WEST LAND COMPANY

By *Thomas White*

Reports of storms are often greatly exaggerated and it frequently happens that a number of persons on the point of investing in land are "scared away." A firm of orchard land dealers turned these incidents into capital by use of a telegram and letter that reached the prospective buyer soon after the storm report. The element of news gave an excuse for the telegram and confirming letter, which urged immediate orders because of price changes that were likely to follow

advantages in his appliance, by the large list of satisfied customers, by the number of unsolicited testimonials and the absolute guarantee, a better plan for removing his doubts has been adopted. The letter says in part:

"We are going to make you a final offer--so liberal you can hardly pass it by. You need not send us any money--you may try the machine absolutely at our risk. Give us the word and we will send the machine, charges prepaid, for you to use for fifteen days. We could not afford to do this, except that the many patrons now using it, convinces us you will be pleased and want to keep it."

A strong testimonial enclosed with this letter added to the force of the appeal to those prospects who needed only a little stronger inducement to pull them over the dead-center of indecision.

Dear Sir:

There remain only 2,000 shares of stock that we are now offering at \$90 a share. In accordance with a recent decision of the board of directors no more stock will be issued at this price--in fact it is extremely doubtful whether any more stock will be sold at any price.

As you know our buildings are practically completed and the equipment is nearly all installed. The development work is progressing satisfactorily and the property is now earning good returns on the capital stock. As a matter of fact the stock is worth par or better right now and the stockholders would gladly buy all that is left at \$90 but you know the directors have always favored distributing the stock just as widely as possible and they have instructed me to offer it first to those who have been interested in the project but who have not yet bought. It is a case of first come first served, but I'm going to take the responsibility of holding 100 shares in reserve until you have time to reply to this letter. I wouldn't dare take this chance but I know there will be no trouble in disposing of it if you don't want it.

Won't you be so kind as to let me know at once whether or not you want it?

Very truly yours,

Wallace E. Lee

Secretary.

Notice that the price of a commodity will be raised, or notice that the amount is limited and no more can be obtained furnish the most familiar and the most effective last resort scheme to bring into line those who are almost persuaded but need some final decision-maker to get them into action

To impress the prospect with the fact that there will be no better offer coming and that if he ever intends purchasing, the time is ripe for his order, a pen-and-ink postscript is sometimes better than incorporating the idea in the letter. One manufacturer writes an entire letter in pen and ink as a last resort.

He assumes a personal relationship between himself and the prospect, as the result of previous correspondence. It is this assumption of intimacy that warrants the personal message and at the same time the individuality of treatment is frequently an incentive to action.

The personal guarantee of the president or other officer or the promise to give an order personal attention if re-

Dear Madam:

Your suit will be cut individually for you--made to your measure. It will be any of the new "Wellmade" styles you may choose. It will be lined in any way you like--the coat made at any length you prefer and made of any material you select from forty new suitings.

It occurs to us that the reason you have been hesitating may be that you fear the suit will not be perfectly satisfactory, so we are going to make you the best offer it is possible to give any buyer--we are going to offer to make your suit entirely at our risk. If you are not delighted with it in every way, you are under no obligation and can send it back at our expense--your money to be refunded.

In addition we are going to give you a linen, hand embroidered shirt waist, in case your order reaches us within the next ten days. This is especially attractive and made up in the styles shown in the enclosed booklet. We make this special offer to you for two reasons: we know that one order will make you a steady customer; then we want to keep our cutters and tailors busy during the off-season--we want to keep our men all employed and have the organization ready for the rush that will start in about a month. So we are making this special offer but you can see for yourself that we must limit it and we cannot send the extra shirt waist on orders received after the 18th.

Complete directions for ordering are given in the booklet, and you may find in the ten samples of choice suitings enclosed, the one you believe most suitable to your needs. We will gladly send other samples, however, in case none of these are satisfactory.

Very truly yours,



A ladies' suit manufacturer emphasizes in his last resort letter an absolute guarantee. A limited premium offer for prompt action is an additional inducement that made this letter one of the best pullers in the follow-up, although used on those who had "passed up" all other appeals

ceived within a specified time, are last resort schemes that have been used time and again by mail-order specialty houses.

Still another variety of "last chance" letters that have been more than usually effective, is the circular that contains a summary of all propositions offered. This serves two purposes: it gives the prospect a selection from which to choose; it also serves to bring to him previous offers which may appear more attractive than at the time they were made.

A scheme that pulled big returns for a manufacturer introducing a new line of cream separators was a post card written in longhand by the sales manager:

"I would have telegraphed you today but did not know just how to reach you. We have decided to exhibit our separators at your county fair which opens September 8th and we must have the name of our local representatives on the printed matter that we will distribute at that time. If you want to act as representative for Worth Township write or wire acceptance and sample machine will be sent you at special agency terms. Advise me immediately. Must know at once."

The scheme was successful because it was a real incentive to prompt action. The prospect had the double inducement to order at once: getting his own separator at a low price and the possibility of making a profit out of sales to others.

Letters, telegrams, post cards, circulars and all kinds of literature are brought to bear on the prospect in the last effort to get his business. But they all carry one idea—that nothing in the way of better prices, quality, terms or other inducements will be offered later. Often, to force immediate action, the proposition is limited to a certain date. But in handling a last resort scheme the correspondent must not forget to leave an opening through which to "come back" at a later date with an entirely new proposition. As an accepted principle that is always applicable, the last resort letter is built about this idea: there will be no better chance because the seller has reached his limit in liberality. Bear the fact in mind, however, that no matter how alluring your proposition, the prospect may have some valid reason for not accepting it now—but may want to consider it later, so the way must be left open to resume negotiations. The prospect must be left in such a frame of mind that he will not expect a repetition of the special offer that was temporarily made for some well-understood reason.

Schemes For AWAKENING DEAD Prospects

PART IX SCHEMES THAT HAVE MADE LETTERS PULL CHAPTER 44

EVERY FIRM *has a questionable asset in its inactive files—lists of prospects who have written for catalogues but never ordered, and lists of customers who have not bought anything for a long time. Here are names that represent a cash investment—every name a POTENTIAL CUSTOMER, and the problem of the sales manager is to awaken these dead prospects, find the cause of dissatisfaction, remove it and re-establish good will. Here are given letters written by some of the most successful mail-order men in the United States—letters that won back customers and led directly to thousands of dollars worth of business—here are schemes that injected life into dormant prospects and cemented the loyalty of luke-warm customers*

THE sales manager of a mail-order specialty house got into some trouble with the principal stockholder of the concern and was discharged. The officers, recognizing his ability, arranged with him to take a list of dead prospects and work them on a commission basis of twenty per cent.

In this file were names of those who had written in for catalogues and other information but who had never bought—names of prospects whom the regular follow-up had failed to sell, and former customers who had made no purchases for two years or more.

First the names were sorted and classified as far as possible—some had written in giving their reasons for not buying

THE PERSONAL APPEAL THAT STRIKES HOME 163

Dear Sir:

The other day I got to thinking that I would like to know just how many customers had been dealing with us steadily for five years or over. So I took a couple of girls and started to check through our customer files.

Whenever they found a card of a former customer who had not ordered anything for a year or more, it was handed over to me. There were not many of these--but I don't want to have any of that kind. Your name appeared among this number.

I wish you'd tell me honestly what the reason is. I know it can't be because of dissatisfaction because we guarantee satisfaction and if anything slipped through the inspector's hands that was not all right I am sure you would have told us so we could have replaced it or refunded the money. IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE, YOU KNOW, WHAT THE TROUBLE IS, WE MAKE IT RIGHT.

So I can't imagine why you have stopped buying. Won't you tell me now? It is surely something that has never come up before or we would have provided against it--something we don't know about, yet it is liable to occur again, I suppose, unless you write us so we can be on our guard.

I shall be expecting to hear from you about this and have instructed the girl who opens the mail to bring your letter right into my office just as soon as it gets here.

Very truly yours,

M. B. Andrews.

President.

Here is a letter that brought back over fifty per cent of the lost customers of a mail-order house. In the majority of cases the patrons were a little disappointed in some purchase—not enough dissatisfied to “register a kick” but enough to try another house and there was no object in changing back as long as the new house gave satisfaction. The personal appeal of this letter, however, won back more than half the former customers

and the experienced mail-order salesman could read between the lines of other letters the probable reason that held back the prospect. So he prepared a personal letter, playing up to one group new and improved features in the firm's product. To others who were apparently unable to pay a fancy price he featured a second grade, equal in wearing qualities but plain in finish and sold on easy terms. In all the letters he inserted a guarantee and enclosed a cash coupon good for half his commission if applied on their first order within fifteen days.

Although the house had been holding these names as worthless, thirty-eight per cent made some reply and twenty-two per cent placed orders—the discharged employee made more during the year on his commissions than he would have drawn as a salary. This led to the creation of a new department to work out the dead file, get in touch with once-interested prospects and win former customers back into the list of buyers.

The sales manager of one of the large mail-order houses of Chicago had his attention called one day to the large stack of files of former customers—thousands of them. These names haunted him for a week and one morning he wrote a letter—it was very personal—sent to a large try-out list. Here is the letter:

Dear Sir:

Looking over our records a few days ago, I noticed that you haven't been so good a customer of ours in the past twelve months as you used to be, and the more I looked at that record the more I wondered what we had done that caused you to practically stop trading with us.

Finally I decided to drop you a line and ask you whether you are willing to tell me, personally, frankly, just what the trouble has been, and whether there is anything we haven't done that we should have done, and whether there is anything we can do NOW to get you back on our list of regular customers; if we can we surely want to do it.

Of course, accidents will happen at times, and if one has happened in this case, I hope you will tell me about it. I think I can fix it up the very day I get your letter.

Won't you write me personally on the back of this letter and tell me just how you feel about trading with us? Please use the enclosed (stamped) envelope, as I want your reply to come to my desk unopened.

Why not send in an order with your reply? I'll see that it is filled JUST RIGHT.

Very truly yours,

CHAMPION SUPPLY CO..

Per *Wallace E. Lee*

County Manager.

P. S. --The best catalogue we have ever issued is just now coming off the press and I am sending you a copy of it today. I hope you will look through it carefully.

Out of the first mailing to 1,500 former customers, 1,035 were awakened and the orders that came in amounted to more than \$5,000 as a direct result of this one letter—ten times the amount expended for postage and for cash adjustments of complaints. Then there was the greater asset of former customers reinstated and good will established.

In both these instances the secret of the awakening of a dead prospect was not some new inducement or some special offer but a strong personal letter, a letter of warm blood and human interest.

There are, doubtless, hundreds of concerns in the country each having thousands of names in the dead files that might be transferred back to the active customer list with the right kind of a letter. It takes a big cash outlay to get the names of prospects and the expense of making the first sale is frequently more than the profit on that sale. These latent prospects and these former customers are too valuable to be buried in the dead file; they can be brought to life—most of them—by letters that go straight out to them with a man-to-man appeal.

So many correspondents make the mistake of concluding that because an inquirer does not respond to the routine follow-up he cannot be sold and immediately his name is transferred to the graveyard. But there are a thousand reasons why a man may be interested and yet not be in a position to buy just at this particular time. The wise correspondent will look upon him as a prospect until he is sold or definitely known to be out of the market. Even though it may be decided that it is useless to waste more advertising on him for the present, the prospect should be left in such a frame of mind towards the house that he can be easily interested when he is ready to buy.

Some houses endeavor to classify the names in the dead file grouping those who do not buy because of price or terms. The surest way of awakening these prospects is by some special offer, some "bargain counter" attraction. Recently a mail-order house selling through agents adopted a new policy of giving territorial cash prizes in addition to commissions on sales to agents. All agents who had dropped out were included in the list to which the announcement of this policy was made. There was an immediate renewal of interest. Agents started

Dear Sir:

Of all the experience I have had in the sixteen years I have been in the manufacturing business, this is the most perplexing--

To have my mechanical experts plan out and perfect an adding machine that will produce quick, accurate results; that is strong, durable and compact; that will do the same work as one of the high priced machines--that I can sell for \$20 as against other \$200 machines of no greater practical merit--

And then to find that only one out of ten bankers will even look at the machine.

So I'm writing this letter personally. For I know the machine. And I know many bankers. I know that at a directors' meeting there is little of more interest than how to simplify and reduce the cost of clerical work. Nothing so interests the president--nothing so interests the cashier. And absolutely nothing so interests the stock holders--the customer and prospective customer--as decreased cost combined with absolute accuracy.

The fault must then have been with our literature--so I'm sending you none but I have written and numbered a card. If you will sign and mail it, I will send on an Adams Adding Machine at my expense for you to try for ten days, absolutely free.

This is a blunt business proposition. For the sales department has mailed letters and literature to you without avail. And it is up to me to make you such an unusual proposition that it will first attract your attention and be so utterly fair that you can hardly refuse it. That proposition is on the card enclosed. Why not mail it today?

Very truly yours,

L. W. Hamilton

President.

Here is a letter that brought big returns for it took the recipient into the reader's confidence, brought him into sympathy with the seller's problems and then presented an inducement in the form of a new proposition--a selling plan that featured the ten days' free trial

back to work who could not have been induced to return without this special offer of prizes.

The same principle is sometimes applied to luke-warm prospects who have been temporarily dropped. The special offer in some form will often rekindle their interest.

"If any considerable number of people answer your advertisement and write for further information and then do not buy,"

MAN-TO-MAN LETTER THAT REVIVED CUSTOMERS 167

My dear Mr. Weston:

Our records show that you have bought goods from us, so you know something of our prices and values; but I feel that with profit to yourself, we could furnish you with a larger share of the things you need, if you would allow us to do so!

I want to lay special stress on the difference between our cash prices and the prices which the Southern consumer pays the local dealer, and especially when he buys on time.

Personally you may never buy on time, but having lived in the South most of my life, I am well acquainted with the general conditions. I was once a clerk in a big store in the cotton belt of North Carolina, and I never ceased to wonder how a farmer could afford to come to that store and pay 12 cents a pound for Western side meat which cost us only 5 or 6 cents a pound; and like prices for other items.

On asking my employer one day why he charged so much for his meat he replied, "Cause we sell it on time, and some never pay; if any of 'em pay cash," take off 2 cents a pound." I realize today, better than I did then, just what those people were paying us for time. The credit of most of them was good, and yet if they bought 300 pounds of meat at 12 cents, payable October 1, the bill would be \$36, whereas, if they paid cash when they bought it, say in June, their bill would be \$30; therefore we charged those farmers \$6 interest for four months' use of \$30, which is at the rate of 50% a year. Why, in many states if a man loaned out money at that rate he would be arrested!

Of course, a part of this went to offset poor accounts, and the worst of this was that the man who made the bad debt didn't suffer for it. The man whose credit was good was the fellow who had to come around October 1, and (at the rate of 2 cents a pound) pay his share of the bad debts.

The lesson from this is that the man who can't pay, and the man who won't pay—these are the gainers from the credit system, while the man whose credit is good will be the loser. That man should learn to obtain and pay cash for his supplies. He can do it just as soon as he clearly realizes that he MUST do it.

It is such a costly business, this credit system, that when you dig down into it a little, you conclude that the HIGH man is the only fellow who can afford it, and of course he don't need it; but how on earth can the poor man, working hard to dig a living out of 100 acres of land, and usually rented from a grasping landlord—land from which he can hardly coax half a bale of cotton to the gin, and often forced to sell that at less than cost—how can that man afford to pay \$6 bonus for a \$30 lot of meat that cost the merchant only \$15. He hasn't any money to give away. Would he not better borrow money, even at 10% interest, and then pay CASH, than to pay 50% or 60% for credit? And remember: even if he had paid cash for his meat at the local store, the bill would have been \$30, or about 100% profit. You never pay such profits as that when you buy of Central Supply House.

Now, this may not interest you personally, but it does apply to a lot of your neighbors, and I am writing it to you because I want you to realize the advantage of buying from Central Supply House and for the VERY CLOSEST of cash prices.

We are selling nearly 50 million dollars worth of goods a year, and our prices are awfully low. There is nothing surprising about this, because we either manufacture the goods, or we buy directly from the factories; and as we "turn over" our stock several times each year (which means fresh goods to the customer), we can well be satisfied with the smallest margin of profit.

Between us and the factory there is no wholesaler, no jobber, no manufacturer's agent, no warehouse man—no ANYBODY. Between us and the CUSTOMER there is no costly display of goods, no show windows and show cases, no sales clerks or traveling salesmen, no idle time, no lost motion. This leaves Central Supply House as the only station between the Southern farmer and factory prices. See the Point!

I am enclosing a pamphlet which will give you SOME GOOD REASONS WHY! It is called "Straight Talk," and that's just what it is—straight and fair and honest. Read it carefully; but don't get the idea that we are attacking either the merchant or the editor, so many slanders have been made against our business that we simply want to answer some of them, so that our customers will know the facts; that's all.

If you haven't a copy of our Big 1200-page Catalogue, it will certainly pay you to get one. We send it free to anyone on application. If you would like a copy, fill out and return the enclosed card (no postage stamp required), and we will gladly send it to you, by return mail, postpaid.

We would like your further orders. Use the enclosed envelope and I will personally see that your goods are shipped promptly and accurately.

I would be glad to have you answer this letter and express yourself freely on the question; and if you have a neighbor who would be interested in the matter, pass the letter and pamphlet along to him, together with the extra postal card enclosed. If there is anything in it, let him get the benefit of it; if there isn't, no harm will be done.

Very truly yours

F. V. Benton, County Manager.

ML427

Orders amounting to thousands of dollars resulted from this letter

says an experienced mail-order man, "you may set it down that the trouble is with your selling plan and not with the prospects. The only way you can hope to reach them is by adopting a new plan—go after them with new arguments, different kinds of offers, approach them from different angles. Sending them the same old dope later on will seldom sell them."

This may be accepted as a fundamental principle that should be kept in mind: if men are interested and you sell only a limited number the fault is probably due to a wrong selling plan—in other words, to awaken these dead prospects you must change your campaign and try to interest them with something entirely new and different.

The customer who has drifted away from a house for no particular reason may frequently be won back by a warm, personal letter telling him that the house has missed his business, and would like to have him once more numbered with its customers. The reminder that a former customer's credit is still good, coupled with some announcement, price list, or new catalogue, will frequently bring back lost trade.

But the prospect of a mail-order house who has never been a customer is a harder proposition. The correspondent of a house manufacturing corsets selected a list of dead prospects—prominent merchants it had never been able to reach—and wrote to each, expressing the regret that the firm no longer made the AAA corset as it had been entirely replaced by the BBB line which he was sure would prove much more satisfactory. A sample was sent so the improved features could be seen. Nearly all the merchants replied that they were at a loss to understand the letter, as they had not asked about AAA corsets and could not find anyone in their store who had, and so forth. Their letters gave the correspondent the cue for following them up and the ruse brought the sample corset forcibly to their attention. The result was the opening of quite a number of very desirable accounts. Such a scheme might not be approved by some houses—it is given here merely as a plan that was tried out and proved highly satisfactory by one firm.

A novelty house, taking advantage of a new "craze," sent a special delivery letter to prospects whom it had never sold, calling attention to the new fad and offering to send by express an assorted lot of goods upon receipt of a telegram, a blank for which

Dear Sir:

Some time ago you were interested in Washington and Oregon Orchard lands. I remembered this and am sending you a couple of tickets to the Land Show at the Armory this week where an exhibit of fruit will be shown. You have given this matter such serious thought that I'm sure you'll want to take advantage of this opportunity.

Yesterday 4,625 persons paid admission to see these exhibits. There is an ever growing interest in the land they represent. It is inevitable that these shows and the awakened interest in farm life will take thousands of families from the cities out to these western lands where the opportunities are increasing so rapidly. There was a rush for desirable fruit lands after last year's show--and the result was an advance in the price of the land.

I understand that even now our directors are contemplating advancing the price of the fruit property we are offering, because of the increased demand for it. While you are at the show, look over the prize non-irrigated fruit grown on our properties--the Columbia River Farms. This comes from the land owned by officers of our company. We are offering adjoining properties of the same character. There is still a chance for you to secure some of this before the price advances.

While you are at the Columbia River Farms booth, get one of the new booklets on "Apples and Independence". It gives some new figures and interesting facts on the relative advantages of the various sections of the fruit belt.

Very truly yours.

Harry L. Peck

The fact should always be kept in sight that the prospect, although he has not given any indication of continued interest, may be deeply interested long after his original inquiry. Business reasons may prevent his taking hold of a proposition at the time but he may be laying his plans for the future--and those plans may include your product. In buying land, for instance, it is usually a matter of education and even after a man makes up his mind to invest, it may take him a long time to decide among different sections. The above letter, accompanying tickets to a Land Show, awakened many dormant prospects and lead to a large number of sales

was enclosed. Stress was laid upon the advantage the merchant would have in being the first in his community to show the new line and several hundred accounts were opened.

While the average concern hesitates to use radically novel schemes to stir up the interest of dead prospects, they have proved

immensely effective at times. A house selling machinery by mail to manufacturers employed drastic measures to get a spark of life from those who had been dropped after an exhaustive follow-up campaign.

A mourning envelope and paper with conventional black borders was used. The letter was brief:

"Having written so often I felt sure YOU were dead. I therefore wished to express my condolence to other members of the firm but not knowing the name of any particular person associated there, I address this letter to YOU.

Of course, if I have made a mistake, YOU will set me right."

These were mailed under two-cent stamps and sealed. The immediate returns showed that they were all read. The results were varied, some firms vigorously resenting the "insult." Many "warm" letters were received from them, but the house was given a chance to know they were still in business—potential customers. An opportunity was offered to smooth over the jar. Others saw the point, some ordering and some replying on mourning paper. The letter created wide comment and forced the company's line onto the attention of many possible buyers and the results were highly satisfactory. Few concerns would sanction such a scheme, but in this case it was so cleverly followed up that good results were obtained, not only in immediate orders but in regular customers.

It often requires a jolt to awaken dead prospects, especially dealers who are buying elsewhere. But if any large number of people are sufficiently interested to write for catalogues, samples, prices, and so forth, and then do not buy, the trouble is undoubtedly basic—goes further back than the wording of the letters, and points to the fundamental selling plans which must be changed. The former customer can best be awakened by a heart-to-heart letter showing concern over the loss of his trade, trying to ascertain the cause of dissatisfaction, if any, and to adjust it so that future cordial relations may be resumed.

Drumming Up *Local* Trade By LETTERS

PART X EXTENDING A STORE'S TRADE BY LETTER CHAPTER 45

IN a city with a large and shifting trade the advantages of general public announcements of sales that reach all classes, as in newspaper advertisements, posters and hand-distributed circulars, are obvious. But to reach SPECIAL CLASSES of "prospects," or to reach customers with SPECIAL MESSAGES, the letter offers opportunities with which no general publicity can compete. This chapter describes when and how such letters may be used—and to whom they may be sent

MERCHANTS generally do not make much use of sales letters on town people. They do not know exactly how, they shy at the cost, they depend too much on newspaper advertising, handbills, circulars and schemes.

But a sales letter campaign is not such a formidable proposition. It merely amounts to saying in a letter exactly what the merchant would tell his prospects if he made a house-to-house canvass for business.

All he needs is a list of names of probable customers. These he can easily secure from his own records—credit accounts, C. O. D. and delivery slips. Additional names can be secured from the city and telephone directories and special sources, such as incidentally suggested in this article. The retailer can either print his letters on a duplicating machine or have the work done by a local printer. The names and addresses can be filled in by a couple of girls in his own office.

The cost to which he at first objects is not such a big item. If the retailer has a duplicating machine he should be able to turn out excellent letters for \$8 per thousand or less. One retailer gets his work done for less than \$7. Following is a table of expense per thousand letters:

Lithographed letterheads (bond paper)	\$2.25
Filling in name and address.	1.36
Duplicating labor and ribbon.	.29
Envelopes.....	1.25
Addressing envelopes.	1.36
Total.....	<u>\$6.51</u>

If an envelope is used which shows the name and address through a glazed front surface, the cost of addressing the envelopes is eliminated and the total cost of \$6.51 would be reduced to \$5.15. Adding \$20 for two-cent postage it is apparent that the retailer can send 1,000 personal letters into 1,000 homes for less than \$30 a thousand. If he encloses a circular or has to hire this work done for him, the cost will run a little above \$30 per thousand.

Sales letters usually work better in conjunction with other forms of advertising. But there are certain retail stores, both large and small, that have given up all other kinds of advertising, and have centered their entire solicitation on letters.

A merchant in an Iowa town where the local newspapers have a circulation of only 1,000 copies a day, claims that it is necessary to use personal letters to get direct results. The newspapers' circulation do not reach enough persons, and those they reach do not seem to be particularly influenced. The little weeklies do not carry much weight in their advertising columns and so this merchant is forced to use letters.

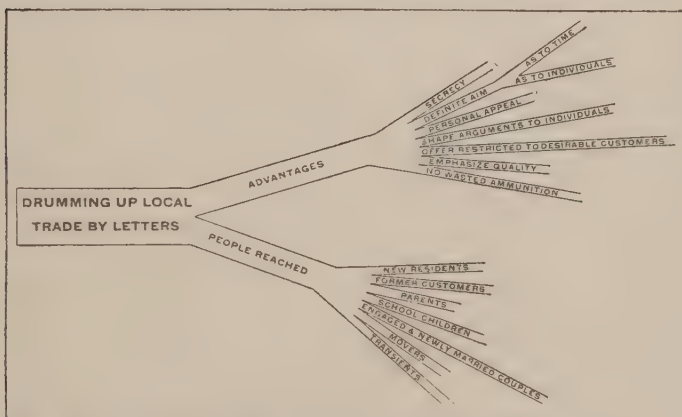
A stationery store in Los Angeles has adopted a plan of sending out personal letters to the exclusion of all other kinds of advertising. A few years ago this concern used the newspapers regularly in its endeavor to attract new trade and hold old trade to the store. By checking the results of the newspaper advertising carefully the proprietor decided that he was spending too much money for the results obtained. Through a method of listing and classifying the people who came into the store he proved to

himself that there was too much wasted circulation in this method of advertising.

It was finally decided to try out a series of personal letters, using a good quality of bond paper, die stamped letterheads, written on a typewriter and signed by the proprietor himself.

The plan was to make it as nearly a personal letter as possible. The success which attended the plan justified its continued use.

The advantages of sales letters, considered from a retail point of view, are that your message is transmitted in a personal way to each recipient. He takes it to himself and applies it to



his own needs. Another advantage is that it enables you to present your proposition in such a confidential way that your competitors are not stirred up. Their newspaper advertisements which are spread before the public give you the advantage. Your letters go silently through the mails and do their work as confidential agent in each household.

In Los Angeles, a year ago, the furniture stores became involved in an advertising warfare, which resulted in a general slashing of prices and the subsequent demoralization of the furniture business. Every store suffered but one. This store did not enter into the sensational newspaper advertising. The other stores believed that this concern had not entered into the campaign at all, but they were mistaken. This furniture shop was a quality store,

selling quality goods for quality prices. Instead of getting down on the same level with its price-cutting competitors, it held aloof, and here is the point: it drove home its selling talk with letters.

A series of four follow-up letters were prepared, which were mailed regularly to every home in Los Angeles and the suburbs. While other stores were confusing and bewildering the public with prices that shifted daily, this store, by its letters, was building up a reputation for quality goods, sold for one price only. The result was that the better class of citizens turned from the price-cutting stores and bought goods of the store which they felt was selling a high grade of furniture for just about what it

Dear Madam:

The advantages of our charge account system have been extended to thousands of patrons throughout the country and the saving of time and trouble is so gratifying that they are enthusiastic in recommending it to their friends.

Charge customers may order at any time, by mail, telephone, telegraph, or in person, and bill will be rendered at the end of the month when settlement can be made. One can in this way take immediate advantage of special offerings.

If you have no account with us, and are desirous of opening one, please fill out the enclosed slip, and we shall give the matter prompt attention.

We are sending you our supplementary catalogue, containing many of the most notable values which are now being offered, and, if desired, we will gladly forward our complete catalogue upon request.

Respectfully yours,

Wallace E. Lee

The city department stores no longer look upon charge accounts as an accommodation but a trade-pulling feature as people buy more freely where they do not have to pay out the cash at the time. This letter is a cleverly worded invitation to open an account. The saving of time and trouble is emphasized and the convenience of ordering by mail, telephone, telegraph or in person is pointed out. Reference is made to a catalogue which brings before the reader attractive offerings that could be easily ordered if she had a charge account. Special letters are sent out to school teachers, nurses and other desirable customers

was worth. This feeling of confidence was built up entirely with letters.

And letters may be just as effectively used for overcoming prejudice. In Omaha there is a men's furnishing store, catering exclusively to men, and advertising as "The Man's Store." This proved an excellent means for attracting the male trade, but where men trade so largely, the women hesitate at the threshold. Inasmuch as many women buy considerable clothing for their husbands and sons, especially at Christmas time, this reputation

Dear Miss Doe;

Allow us to compliment you upon the attainment which fits you for graduation and to offer the facilities of this establishment in your quest for habiliment suitable for the occasion.

We are enclosing a few samples of appropriate dress materials and desire further to call your attention to our excellent assortment of shoes, gloves, hosiery, lingerie and the many little accessories of dress which by their correctness of mode make choosing here always satisfactory.

We trust to see you soon.

Sincerely yours,

BLANK BROTHERS.

This letter was mailed to each member of the graduating class several weeks before commencement

for masculine trade was an obvious disadvantage. To overcome this prejudice the store prepared a selected mailing-list of the names of women throughout the city. These names were secured largely from the telephone directory on the assumption that persons who had telephones in their residences were able to trade at this exclusive store. This list was verified and corrected from the city directory and other sources, so that practically all of the letters which went out to a "Mrs." were correct.

Each woman received a carefully prepared letter, with her name and address so well filled in that the communication looked like a personal message. This letter pointed out the fact that

this "Man's Shop" was exactly the place to buy Christmas gifts for men, that it was in this exclusive shop that the most appropriate and acceptable gifts could be secured. In order to drive this point home still further and to put the women perfectly at ease when they came to the store, an engraved card was enclosed in each letter, inviting the recipient to call. "With our invitation in their hands," says the proprietor, "this timidity, modesty or whatever you want to call it, seemed to leave." Another plan which this store found very successful was an "At Home," to which every woman on the mailing-list was personally invited. Refreshments and music were a feature of this social event, much as if the function had been held on a residential avenue instead of Sixteenth Street.

Dear Madam:

Saving is one of the first duties of a man or a woman. If you are not saving something regularly you are overlooking a very important duty.

A bank account is a great comfort under certain circumstances, and it is easy to have a bank account, for you do not have to start with a large sum but may start in a very small way and add to your account from time to time.

We have many thousands of men and women depositing their savings with us, and we welcome you to this army of thrifty, far-seeing people.

We understand that you received one of the TRUTH'S home-savings banks. You no doubt observed that the check was drawn on this bank. Why are you not using your bank and check? Just bring your bank in with \$2 or more and sign for your account.

Hoping to see you soon, I am

Very truly yours,

Edward Brown

The first paragraph is too preachy and lacks in interest value. In the second paragraph it would be better to specify some of the circumstances under which a bank account is a great comfort. There is no point to the argument in the third paragraph and not enough details are given to draw the holder of the check to the bank. As a whole the canvass is weak

Dear Madam:-

A question that arouses interest.

An effective reminder but not objectionably aggressive.

Haven't you overlooked a little matter that you had expected to attend to before now?

According to the list turned over to us by the SCRANTON TRUTH at the close of its "Saving Campaign" in June, you were one of those who secured a pocket savings-bank and a fifty-cent check as a "nest egg" of an account.

You no doubt recall that the TRUTH'S checks were made out on this bank, and the TRUTH expects us to report from time to time those who have started accounts. Unless you were in yesterday (we haven't yet checked up yesterday's names) it seems that you haven't used your check.

The fact that the bank believes he intends to start an account is likely to start a man to thinking.

Of course you were determined to start an account when you received the little bank and the check, and we are wondering what has caused you to neglect opening the account. It's very little trouble you know; come in with at least \$2 to deposit with the fifty-cent check, and the whole thing can be fixed up in a minute or two.

Good argument—one that reader will mentally acknowledge is true.

Saving is largely a matter of habit. Those who save will tell you that it is easy after one makes a start. Saving people have just as good times as others—even better, because they have the sense of protection against unlooked-for expense.

Courteous suggestive paragraph.

If you have lost your check, let us know and we will replace it from a supply that the TRUTH has furnished for such cases. If you do not understand just how the check is to be used, it will be a pleasure for us to explain.

Another little appeal to reader's pride and a hearty expression of good will.

We want to be able to report to the TRUTH that you are on the roll of savers, and we shall certainly do all in our power to make you feel at home in this bank.

The closing sentence is better than the participial form, "Hoping to see you soon."

May we expect to see you soon?

Very truly yours,

Morton & Morton

Down in Birmingham, Alabama, a clothing man makes a systematic bid for transient trade. Each morning one of his

clerks visits all of the better hotels, copying the names on the register of persons who have come into the city during the night or early in the morning. These names are then carefully "filled in" on a form letter, which invites the visitor to their store, something after this fashion:

"We note from the hotel register your arrival in the city, and take this method of extending you an invitation to visit our Clothes Shop--THE SHOP OF QUALITY.

"This is exactly like one of those little exclusive shops you find on Fifth Avenue in New York--only in our store you don't pay the exclusive price.

"While you are here, we would be very glad to have you look over our collection of wearables, whether you are interested in buying or not. We will endeavor to make your visit both entertaining and instructive."

This same store pulls transient trade in a similar way by addressing letters to all persons whose arrival in the city is chronicled in the "personal" column of the daily newspapers. A store in Colorado sends out letters to new residents of the city, offering a special discount to induce them to get acquainted with this store.

Another progressive merchant has a regular letter to send out to people who are moving. Attention is called to the fact that moving reveals wants that must be supplied and a list is included for convenience in checking articles that may be needed such as china, rugs, window shades, linen and other kinds of household furnishings.

This firm also makes a special appeal to all theatrical people, to whom letters are sent immediately upon their arrival in Denver, calling attention to the large line of goods which the store handles. "We give a discount to the profession" is the closing paragraph that appeals to the vanity and to the purse of actors and actresses.

A general merchandiser at Laharpe, Kansas, sends a letter to the children at various times during the year, such as at the opening of school, inviting them to come to the store for supplies. Indirectly the letter is aimed at the parents, but the merchant does not overlook the real worth of the good will and friendship of the children.

As the society columns of the daily newspapers chronicle engagements, it is the duty of the stenographer of a Birmingham clothing store to enter these names on cards and file them with

Dear Sir:

I beg to solicit your kind patronage in the tailoring line because I feel I can offer you better facilities in every way than you have been getting. If I can't, don't read any more of what I have to say, but simply throw this letter into the waste basket.

I feel that I am turning out the best clothes in town for the money.

My prices range for Suits, \$25.00 and up; Overcoats, \$28.00 and up; Trousers, \$6.00 and up; Fancy Vests, \$5.00 and up.

My woollens contain all the latest designs and shades. My garments are cut, fitted and made on the above premises by men tailors. I cut and fit your garments the way you order them, because you're the one that's going to wear the clothes.

I guarantee to press and repair any garment I make free of charge for one year. I solicit open accounts when proper references are furnished.

Thanking you for your attention, and trusting I'll have the pleasure of your calling on me in the near future, I beg to remain,

Yours very truly,

Thomas White

A letter that is a good example of wasted ammunition. The writer apologizes from the first sentence to the last—few readers would resist the invitation in the first paragraph to throw the letter into the waste basket. The writer begs to solicit patronage and begs to remain very truly; he “feels that he can offer better facilities” and feels that he is turning out the best clothes;” he solicits the reader’s open account—if proper references are furnished. Three of the six paragraphs begin with “I” and two other start off with “My.” Every sentence but the last one starts out in the first person. The “you” element is entirely lacking

the date of the wedding, so that additional literature of interest may be sent to the prospective bridegroom.

A booklet, “What Men Should Wear at Weddings,” is sent out to those whose social position requires outfits such as this

store features. The booklet has a cover of heavy white wedding paper with title embossed on the front. It is tied at the back with white silk cord and tassels. A half-tone photograph of the shop interior appears on the second page, while six pages are devoted to a thorough description of the proper forms and usages

Dear Sir:

Do you know of any investment which will pay you 15% Net? This personal letter to you tells of one and it's an opportunity you should not pass up.

Pick out any suit or pants pattern, including blue serges, in our tailoring department and we will make up the garment for you AT 15% DISCOUNT.

You know the quality of the work turned out by our cutter and tailors. "It's the Best By Test."

The best dressers wear "Mayer Made" clothes, that's why you should take advantage of this 15% discount.

You don't need your check book or any cash when you want anything in the line of men's and boys' wear.

Step into our store, any time, select what you want-- just say to the clerk "Place That On My Account."

Very truly yours,

MAYER BROS.

Compared with the preceding letter is one sent out by another firm in a similar line. No time is wasted in apologies. The first sentence impels attention, for no man is too busy to read on and find out about a 15% investment. Instead of stating that prices range from "\$25 and up"—which means nothing—this letter gives a specific proposition. The reader is not offered credit provided he can bring in gilt edge references; he is complimented by the assurance that he does not need a check book or cash, for purchases will be charged without question

for the bridegroom and ushers, followed by a page of timely suggestions as to the proper accessories for the ceremony and the trip. Occasionally it is possible to get the bridegroom to suggest this store as a proper place for his attendants and ushers to secure their cravats, gloves and such other accessories as they may need. When this permission is secured, each attendant and usher is sent an engraved card which has space reserved

for the bridegroom's name, advising them of the fact that the store had been commissioned to perform this service.

It has been the experience of this store that a series of letters is certain to produce business which would otherwise be distributed among several merchants, with the result that a uniformity of accessories at weddings, so essential to this most formal function, would be made impossible.

Another merchant in a western city keeps a record of engagements and weddings and a letter is sent to the brides. "The preparation of the home is the point where we meet on common

Dear Sir:

You are the only one who can solve the following problem. We are "stumped." We have done our best but the problem remains unsolved.

Our custom tailoring department turns out "Blank Made" suits, known as clothes of refinement. No better suits made. Trimmed and fashioned faultlessly. Essentially the clothes of a gentleman.

The Problem:

Why have we not had the pleasure of taking your order for a fall suit? Solve the problem for us, let us take your measure today in order to have your suit ready for cold weather.

Yours very truly,

BLANK BROTHERS.

This letter—worded as a "reminder"—brought in many orders from regular customers

ground." This opening paragraph seldom fails to arouse an interest that assures the reading of the sales talk which follows. This firm also finds a successful trade puller in the campaign directed each spring to the members of the graduating class calling attention to the Commencement Day needs that the store supplies.

In a little Kansas town a jeweler secures a list of all the invited guests to weddings, birthday parties, anniversaries and other occasions which call for the presenting of some gift or

remembrance. To each of these persons he mails a carefully prepared letter, pointing out what is proper to give at this particular function, and calling attention to the wide variety of articles which may be procured at his store. He has been unusually

Dear Madam:

The only thing that has kept you from buying a MAGIC VACUUM CLEANER long before this is that you are still a little in doubt as to its value--you still hesitate to believe that it offers positively the biggest value that your money can purchase, which means "purchasing satisfaction."

There are a number of ways in which we might once and for all time remove your prejudice, your doubts, your misgivings. We might point to the nine thousand or more satisfied purchasers. We might show that the Magic Manufacturing Company is away behind orders. We might show you in our salesroom how quickly and easily the cleaner does its work also proving to you that it does not wear the finest rugs, carpets or draperies.

But we have a far better plan than any of these.

You are to try the Magic Vacuum Cleaner in your own home for two weeks--fifteen days--AT OUR RISK.

Simply sign the enclosed request and the MAGIC will be delivered to your home, ready for use. Then put it to a test as thorough--as severe--as you wish. If it does not more than please and satisfy you in every particular, simply say so and we will remove it at our expense and refund every penny of your deposit.

If you are as thoroughly satisfied as the nine thousand others who have purchased, you have simply to continue making the small monthly payments. Could we possibly make a fairer or more liberal offer? Could any offer more clearly prove our absolute faith in the Magic Vacuum Cleaner?

Accept this offer today. Simply sign the enclosed blank, and mail now and the cleaner will come to you at once.

Yours faithfully,

MAGIC MANUFACTURING CO.

Here is a letter from a merchant who is pushing an article that can best be sold by having it demonstrated in the home. Without wasting words the letter presents arguments and a strong inducement. It goes straight to the point and carries conviction

successful with this scheme. Recently he was able to secure the names of only twelve persons who were invited to one of the weddings in his town, but out of the twelve letters sent to these persons he made eleven sales.

In Denver a custom tailor, doing a small business in three back rooms of an office building, decided that there was business in his part of the city which he should secure. In his building and in the immediate neighborhood there were located a large number of professional men. To test out his plan, he selected from the city directory the names of forty physicians who had offices near his shop. Form letters were gotten out and the names and addresses were carefully filled in. The letters were mailed under two-cent postage and in every way made to look like personal communications. From the first letters the tailor received \$450 worth of business. His trade has been very largely increased since with a series of follow-up letters.

A tailor in Chicago with a very poor location turned this fact into a selling argument by the use of letters in which he pointed out that he did not have to pay high rent, that he did his own cutting, that he had not tied up a large amount of money in stock and fancy fixtures, that he sold from samples and in this way gave the customer a much larger selection, that all of this meant an enormous saving in money during the year, that he gave the benefit of this saving to customers; that instead of putting it into plate glass partitions, high priced cutters and oriental rugs, he put it into the quality, and workmanship of his clothes. This same scheme has been very cleverly worked out by retail stores on side streets and in other poor locations. They have pointed out very clearly why goods bought on one of the main streets cost more than the same goods purchased at their stores, which are out of the high rent district.

In Lincoln, Nebraska, a tailor has built up his business entirely by the use of carefully prepared personal letters, written on note size paper and given a quality tone throughout. These letters were used in a campaign for credit accounts. They pointed out how easy it was to establish a credit account at this store, and once it was established, how satisfactory the customers would find the arrangement.

In working up such a trade the letter was superior to any form of general publicity, for the tailor could restrict his campaign to those persons whom he knew to be good credit risks.

Dear Madam:

*Snappy
Opening*

If you want to reduce your ice bill anywhere from 25% to 35%--if you want to get full refrigerator value for every ounce of ice you buy--this is your opportunity.

*Arousing
interest*

The cost of living is increasing daily--so that the housewife who would like to reduce her household expenses must be on the alert for any new improvements that mean economy. You will find by actual test that the new Arctic Enamel Refrigerator will not be an expense--but an investment that will be returned to you before the end of the summer.

Description

The materials used in the construction of this refrigerator and the scientific principles on which it is designed make for economy and convenience, and it is at all times absolutely sanitary. With ordinary care it will last a lifetime--saving you money every year you use it.

*Strong
argument*

The Arctic is lined with white enamel throughout and is absolutely air tight. It is impossible for moisture to accumulate on the walls of the provision chambers, on account of perfect drainage and dry air circulation. It is easy to keep clean, no corners or angles for the accumulation of dirt. Free circulation of dry air at all times prevents offensive odors or contamination of foods. You can place milk, butter, eggs, cheese, fruit and vegetables all in the same compartment without the least danger of contamination.

Many of the largest hotels in the country and nearly all the railroads have adopted the

Here is a strong, well-balanced letter to a local customer. It contains

This merchant recently galvanized his list of prospects by getting up a clever scheme with an imitation telegraph blank. It was only a few weeks before Easter and for some reason the men of the city had been very slow in ordering their spring suits.

*Presenting
proof*

Arctic system of refrigeration--and there is a reason for this. These hotels and these railroads are managed by hardheaded, shrewd business men--men who know. They found from exhaustive tests that this was the most satisfactory refrigerator ever put on the market.

Persuasion

Make up your mind that you will reduce your ice bills in the future. Make up your mind that hereafter you will keep your food in a sanitary condition. This opportunity is yours--it is within your easy reach.

*Making
inducement*

You simply cannot afford not to investigate--when you can test this wonderful refrigerator at our risk. Why not drop into our store and examine the Arctic--you will not be importuned to buy. Or, better still, sign and mail the enclosed card to us promptly and test this refrigerator in your own home for ten days. If you are not more than satisfied with it, if you do not find it more than we claim, simply notify us and we will call for it and the experience will not cost you a penny.

*Prompting
action.*

If this refrigerator were not right; if it did not give absolute satisfaction, surely we could not afford to make such an exceedingly liberal trial offer. We guarantee that it will be satisfactory to you and we will take up with you promptly any suggestions you may have to make regarding it, once you give it a test.

Easy to order

In sending us the card you do not bind yourself to do business with us, so mail it now before you lay this letter aside.

Very truly yours.

Mitchell Bros.

all of the essential elements, logically and convincingly arranged

In order to impress upon them the closeness of Easter and the necessity of getting their orders in soon if they wished to secure their suits for this day, the tailor wrote a short note on telegraph blanks, and had them delivered by one of his boys dressed

in a messenger's uniform. The telegram was a personal type-written note which read:

Lincoln, Nebr.

C. Ellinger, City.

Call Auto. 6545 and make an appointment this week in order that we may take your measure and have your suit finished for Easter Sunday, March 27th.

Spring woollens are now ready for your inspection.

Mayer Bros.

These messages in the familiar yellow envelope were delivered by a boy in uniform and had every appearance of a real telegram. The novelty won attention and resulted in the immediate placing of many orders

A Lincoln department store at Christmas time greatly swelled the receipts of its toy department by advertising in the newspapers that "Santa Claus" would place a small remembrance in each child's stocking left at the store before a certain date. When the stocking was left, the child's name and the name and address of its parents were secured. This was the basis for an excellent mailing list. A few days before the date set when "Santa Claus" would hand out the stockings, the children received personal letters from him, telling them that he feared it would be impossible for them to see all of the playthings the morning they left the stocking on account of the crowd, and suggesting that they come again with their parents and show them just exactly what they wanted for Christmas. This scheme worked very satisfactorily. The mothers were much delighted, and the happiness of the children can be imagined.

One of the biggest advantages of the form letter as used on city customers is that it enables the retailer to select the prospective customers which are the most desirable. This becomes especially important when the retailer has some particular offer to make, which might be made better in a confidential manner.

Recently a laundry in Texas built up a mailing list of persons who were not then patrons of the laundry, but who would be desirable customers. Newspaper advertising had failed to

Dear Madam:

This is one of those stores away from the high-rent district, that you occasionally run across, where you get full value for your money.

After you read this letter I want you to visit this store--but don't expect to find it fitted up with expensive fixtures, solid mahogany counters and elaborate rest rooms.

When you walk into a store and find these, just stop a minute and ask yourself the question, "Who pays for all of these expensive things?" You will not have to be told the answer.

Having answered the question to your own satisfaction, I want you to take into consideration the fact that there are only two members in our concern and that they devote their entire time to the business. The heads of departments help to wait on the trade--in fact, this store is run along as economical lines as possible and the enormous saving is given to our customers in the low prices at which we sell our goods.

When you get a bargain at our store--and you get many if you trade with us--tell your friends about it, let them know just what you paid for it and have them compare its value with similar purchases they have made in the high-rent district. And be sure to tell them, too, that I put the value into the goods instead of into high rents and high-priced fixtures.

Make it a point to come and see us the next afternoon you go out to shop. You can transfer from any line to the Lincoln street car which stops at our door. It is but a six minutes' ride from down town--the extra time will be well spent; the saving on your purchases will pay the extra street car fare many times over.

Our annual Mid-Summer sale begins next Monday and prices will be cut in every department. At the advertised prices, the bargains will be unusual, but as a special inducement for you to visit the store Monday morning we are enclosing a special discount card that will entitle you to an additional discount of ten per cent on all purchases made before 12 o'clock.

Very truly,

Harry L. Peck

This letter was used with good results by a firm of retailers who were at a disadvantage in location--several blocks from the shopping center. It was signed personally by one of the proprietors, as was the discount card which was designed to bring in new customers at the same time, Monday morning, that they might be favorably impressed by the crowd and conclude that the store was really a popular place to trade

reach them. It was not wise to offer a special inducement through the newspapers, for then it would attract undesirable prospects even more readily than good customers. A plan was finally hit upon whereby the laundry issued tickets, enclosed in letters and addressed to a selected list of residents. To demonstrate the superior quality of the work a ticket, good for the free laundering of one shirt and two collars, or one shirtwaist, or one washable dress was enclosed with the letter. Each ticket was numbered and stamped with the date the offer expired. This made an individual appeal which could not be overlooked by the recipient.

A Rochester piano dealer was convinced that the best method he could adopt for selling high class piano players was to make some kind of an offer whereby the prospective customer could try the player in his own home. But he did not care to make an offer of this kind to the general public through the newspapers, for there were homes into which he would not care to send a piano player and others would ask for a trial with no intention of purchasing it. So he decided to make this offer through letters to a carefully prepared mailing-list of prospects to whom he could safely make an offer of a free trial.

To all these persons he mailed a letter filled with good sales talk, emphasizing the advantages of a piano player, This offer was aimed specifically at business men, pointing out to them how much pleasure and relaxation they could secure in the evening by having in the house a piano which they could play themselves. In the letter was enclosed a typewritten form which the recipient was asked to sign and mail in order to secure the free trial offer. The letter was so written that each recipient imagined this was a special offer made to him alone or at least to a very few persons. "This scheme," testified the head of the company, "proved highly successful. It seemed to appeal particularly to lawyers, doctors and business men."

The possibilities of letters in drumming up local trade are practically unlimited, and these instances, dipped from the current of every day experience, show how they may be used in different lines of business. They are equally effective in large cities and in country towns. They may cost more than some other forms of advertising but there is no wasted ammunition; every inducement is definitely aimed at a known prospect and frequently pulls trade that could not be attracted by other means.

Keeping Customers "LINED UP"

by *Personal Letters*

PART X EXTENDING A STORE'S TRADE BY LETTER CHAPTER 46

IT is not the new customer who builds up a store: it is the STEADY CUSTOMER who trades at the old stand from year to year who makes a retail business permanent. To hold one old customer is better than to get two new ones—better because it is evidence of the substantial worth of the store and of the "good will" which is the merchant's capital. The EIGHTEEN METHODS of retaining patronage as described in this chapter have stood the test of actual—and successful—trial

HOLDING one old customer is better than getting two new ones. Satisfied customers make up the merchant's good will—and are his strongest advertisement. He must secure new trade; but it is much more important that he hold his old patronage.

Good value and service under ordinary circumstances will hold part of his established trade. But new stores are entering his field. New ideas of merchandising are introduced. New schemes are worked out for winning trade. And as competition increases, the retailer finds that he must give more than good satisfaction and service. He finds he must adopt means of keeping in touch with his customers—of cementing their loyalty.

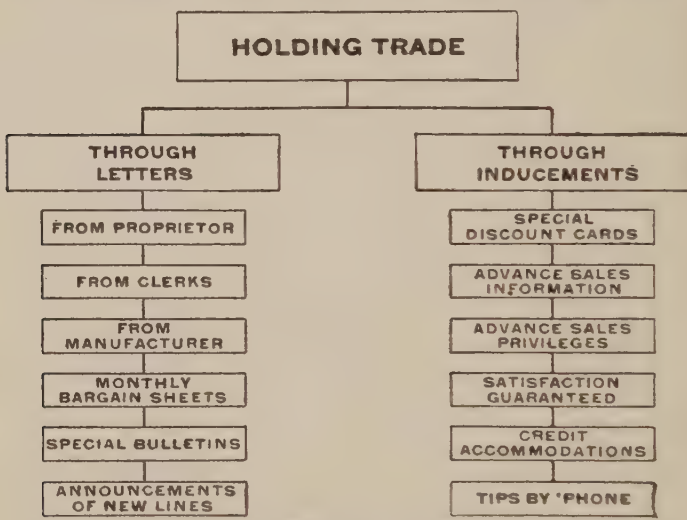
There are many ties for binding customers to the store. One of the best is the use of letters—personal messages to the individual from the house, the manager and the clerk.

The mailing list of customers is one of the merchant's most valuable assets. In sending letters to these persons the

retailer is assured a hearing, for his customers are his friends. They know what he has to offer; have confidence in him. Therefore in getting up any kind of a sales-letter campaign the retailer should aim to reach his customers first; his prospective customers second.

SCHEME 1—THANKING NEW CUSTOMERS

Letters that hold trade are usually letters announcing special and seasonable sales, letters of acknowledgment, letters containing "store news" and letters to fit special



occasions that come up in the retailing business. The effectiveness of these letters has been proved over and over again. The young married couple who have purchased a housekeeping outfit from the local furniture store are going to be favorably impressed when they receive from the president of the store, a signed letter thanking them for their purchase, reminding them that if the goods do not prove satisfactory in every way, the proprietor wishes them to report it at once so the complaint can be immediately adjusted.

Mrs. Brown, who receives from her milliner a neat little Easter letter announcing the arrival of the latest spring hats, is not likely to make her purchase at a store where she is unknown.

SCHEME 2—LETTERS TO FORMER BUYERS

The business man who has been buying his clothes from the tailor on Main street may decide to try out that new fellow, Jones who has opened up an office in the next building, but when he receives a letter from his old tailor, reminding him of the satisfaction which he has received there in the past, he concludes that he does not care to risk Jones. And thus throughout the whole retailing game letters may be used and are used for just such purposes as these—to attach customers to the store so firmly, to make the store's appeal so personal, to make each person feel that he is getting such individual attention that a loyal clientele is built up, which competitors can not readily coax away.

SCHEME 3—MONTHLY "NEWS" LETTER

A Fort Worth department store recognizing the desirability of keeping in close touch with its trade, aims to get a sales letter into the hands of every customer at least once a month. These letters announce special sales, arrivals of new goods, changes in store policy and items of "store news" of interest to the recipient.

THIS CARD ENTITLES MRS. _____
TO THE SPECIAL SEVEN (7) PER CENT DISCOUNT ON
ALL WHITE GOODS UNTIL SATURDAY AT 10 P. M.

PROP.

The "special discount" card was sent out with a personal letter to induce regular customers to visit the store for a special sale. Each card was filled in with the name of a customer and signed by the proprietor

But to make the letter grip it must be built around some sales scheme. It must offer to the customer some kind of an opportunity for profit, some specific inducement to visit the store.

SCHEME 4—SENDING PROOFS OF ADVERTISEMENTS

A scheme which has proved very successful is the advance sale plan, exploited by means of letters. The plan is to have a large display newspaper advertisement set up just as it is to run in the local newspapers on a certain date. As many "proofs" of this advertisement are then struck off as there are names on the mailing list. The proof is enclosed in a letter and mailed to the prospective customer.

SCHEME 5—SENDING "SPECIAL SALE" CARDS

The letter calls the recipient's attention to the proof of the advertisement, stating that this is the regular spring inventory sale, or whatever the sale may be, and points out that to a favored few of the store's old customers this proof is being sent, with a special sale card which entitles the purchaser to buy her goods at the reduced prices two days in advance of the opening of the sale. The advantage of the plan is pointed out. The recipient of the letter may secure whatever she wishes from unbroken lots. She avoids the rush of the sale itself but secures her goods at the bargain prices. The advantage to the merchant is that it practically assures him of the success of his sale before it really opens. There is a psychological appeal in this opportunity of getting in ahead of someone else and, if not over-worked, the plan is invariably a winner.

SCHEME 6—"CONFIDENTIAL DISCOUNT" CARDS

Another good scheme is to issue a confidential discount card to a selected number of names on a mailing list. The plan is to call attention to your goods and then, by means of a confidential discount card, offer a special reduction to the recipient. This is spoken of in the letter as a confidential discount made to a favored few of the store's old customers. To give it an additional personal appeal, the discount card is sometimes typewritten for each person. In any case the name of the recipient of

the special discount is filled in on the card in pen and ink and signed personally by the proprietor or president of the store. This gives an individual touch to the offer which convinces the recipient that he is actually one of a favored few who are to profit by the special discount. Such recognition certainly tightens the hold the store has on the customer.

SCHEME 7—CHATTY LETTER FROM OUT OF TOWN

A dealer in men's furnishing goods in a small Minnesota city carefully studies the men who are leaders in the different social

Dear Ross:

Have been having a great time this week--looking at stocks and samples all the forenoon and to a theatre or amusement park in the evening. Wish you had been with me today. The Cubs shut out New York, 2 to 0. Brown held 'em down to four hits. It was some ball game, I want to tell you.

I'm feeling in high feathers tonight for I've bought the swellest line of shirts and ties you ever saw. They have certainly got out some novel lines this fall. Maybe I made a mistake in going in too heavy, but it looks to me as if the stuff was so good it would sell itself--all I'll have to do will be to wrap it up and make change. I'll tip you off as soon as the new ties get in so you can pick out what you want before they go on sale.

Will be home Saturday night--and glad to get there. This pace is too swift for more than a few days at a time. Say, Ross, you ought to come in a few days before Desplaines Park closes. They have got some great shows there this year.

Yours truly and tired,

Wilson

Whenever one Minnesota haberdasher comes to Chicago to buy goods he writes letters similar to this to the men who set the styles in his town. The letters are written on hotel stationery and the recipients are pleased that the merchant should take time to drop them a line, and the opportunity to look over the new ties before they are offered to the public is a bit of subtle flattery that keeps customers in line

circles, churches, lodges, and in a business way. Then he centers his attention on them. He wants their trade; he wants the trade that will follow them.

Whenever he goes into Chicago to stock up he finds time to write a personal letter to each one of the men—the business talk is not conspicuous and probably carries more weight because of it.

SCHEME 8—CREDIT APPLICATION BLANKS

In the larger cities the retail stores make a persistent effort to establish charge accounts among persons who are financially responsible. Experience has proved to the retailer's satisfaction that where a person has a charge account he will trade more steadily. He will, moreover, buy more goods, month in and month out, than if he had to hand over the money for each purchase. Consequently, letters soliciting charge accounts, constitute one of the most important kind of letters sent out to the customers. From the delivery and C. O. D. slips, mailing lists are made up of persons who would make desirable credit customers. These persons are written and a credit application blank enclosed.

SCHEME 9—PERSONAL NOTE TO A SMALL LIST

Last fall a Chicago department store started a campaign on school teachers of the city, concluding that as a whole these women constitute a very desirable credit clientele. Letters were so carefully prepared and filled in that each message looked like a personal communication. They were printed on heavy note size letterheads and folded once, so that they could be enclosed in square baronial envelopes. At every point they were given the touch of quality. The results were so satisfactory that the same campaign has been duplicated this year on a much larger scale, and special letters are now sent out to nurses and other women wage-earners as well as to teachers.

SCHEME 10—PERSONAL TIPS FROM CLERKS

In a big store it is often difficult to secure that personal appeal which is often the most pleasing feature of the small shop. In order to overcome this disadvantage, many large department stores send out letters over their clerks' signatures. Each clerk

is encouraged to build up an individual following—customers of the store whom he frequently waits on and who know him personally. Then when a particular department has an announcement to make, instead of making it as a big corporation, each clerk signs a certain number of letters, suggesting that when the recipients come to the store at the time of this sale, they call on him, and he will personally see that they are given individual attention.

SCHEME 11—THE LURE OF A BLANK CHECK

A merchant in one of the live western cities sent to his customers plain sealed envelopes which immediately challenged the curiosity by the inscription, above the address, "Fill in the

Dear Mr. Hawkins:

You can fill in this check yourself, and we will endorse it for any amount.

In other words, we have not gone to the expense of marking down prices on fall goods in the usual way this year. A new plan has been adopted to give you the benefit of reduced prices.

Simply bring with you to our store the blank check. Buy whatever you want and we will endorse the check for one-fourth of the amount of your purchase.

Fill in the check yourself.

Very sincerely yours,

BLANK CLOTHING COMPANY.

A blank check was enclosed in this letter—a unique feature that compelled a reading of the correspondence that accompanied it

Check Yourself." As the letter was unfolded it was found to contain a regular lithographed check; the line for the amount was blank. No one was too busy to throw aside the letter without reading its message which was short and to the point.

No one is immune from flattery—if it is not too obvious. People like special attention; like to feel that they are given individual notice—that they are differentiated from “the crowd.” The shrewd merchant brings the personal letter to bear on those whose trade he is especially anxious to hold.

SCHEME 12—USE OF “COMPLAINT POSTALS”

The new school of merchandising does not look upon a sale as over with just as soon as the purchase price is rung up. The transaction must follow the customer home and make sure that the goods are giving satisfaction. Progressive clothiers now follow up the sale of suits and overcoats, especially those that were altered before being delivered. Letters are sent out two or three days after a purchase is made, asking whether the goods are entirely satisfactory and, if not, to make a complaint on an enclosed postal card so that the suit or coat may be sent for at once for further alterations or money refunded. A store that carries a good stock of merchandise and operates on this broad-gauge policy has no trouble in holding its trade. A

IT IS OUR AIM TO GIVE YOU YOUR MONEY'S WORTH
OR MORE, BUT NEVER LESS

YOU favored us with a purchase a short time ago and we beg to inquire now if you are thoroughly satisfied with it? If you are, it will afford us a great deal of pleasure to know this on the attached card. And should you have any cause to complain, kindly use this same means to tell us, then we will try to adjust the matter to your entire satisfaction, so you, like hundreds of others, will not only trade here yourself, but will feel glad to commend us and our merchandise to others.

CLOTHES SHOP

JOHN DOE, MANAGER

(Address.)

*This card is sent out by a Pennsylvania clothier several days after a is urged to enter complaint on the return postal if the purchase is not
adjust complaints makes regular customers of chance*

chance purchaser is converted into a regular customer by a solicitous letter asking for an opportunity to adjust at once anything that is not entirely satisfactory. A two-cent stamp, a postal card and a letter often hold a customer where no direct advertising would increase his loyalty towards the store.

SCHEME 13—CIRCULARIZING CREDIT CUSTOMERS

The sales made to credit customers are very easy to check, and this check affords the store an opportunity of drumming up many customers who have not recently purchased. This is sometimes done by the store, but it is much better to have the clerk write the letter. The average retail house writing a credit customer, who has not purchased for some time, usually opens its letter with some such impersonal phrase as, "In consulting our records, we find that we have not received an order from you for some time." This is an undiplomatic attitude for the retailer to take, for it impresses the recipient of the letter with the fact that she is merely an "account," and that there is really no personal interest taken in her except as her purchases are shown on

CLOTHES SHOP

(ADDRESS)

Regarding my purchase of _____

I wish to say that _____

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

purchase has been made to know if it is satisfactory. The customer proving satisfactory. This solicitation on the part of the merchant to buyers and keeps the old customers in line

the records. It is much better for a clerk to write the customer a letter opening with some such phrase as, "I trust you will pardon the liberty I am taking, Mrs. Jones, but this morning I was talking with our department manager, and I told him that I had not seen you in the store for a long time, and wondered if something had happened to mar the pleasant relations which this store has always had with you." This can be done very diplomatically where clerks become acquainted with the customers.

SCHEME 14—POSTALS WRITTEN BY SALESMEN

Some of the stores provide their clerks with ordinary postal cards. Then when a sale is scheduled, the clerk is instructed to write hurriedly in pencil or in ink to her customers, telling them of the sale that is scheduled and urging them to get to the store early before the choicest goods have been sold. When the customer receives this very personal communication, addressed, written and signed by the clerk, she is sure to attend the sale if she is interested. The customer feels flattered by the attention of the clerk.

SCHEME 15—TIPPING OFF SHOPPERS BY PHONE

The impression that is made on customers by this personal attention from clerks is typified in one actual instance. A young married woman was showing about town a friend who had just moved into the city. Taking her friend into one of the larger department stores she introduced her to seven different clerks, in as many different departments. "I want you to know Miss ——," the city woman said, "so you can notify her about sales as you do me." Now, whenever there is a special sale in which these clerks believe Miss —— would be interested, they write her a postal card, calling her attention to the sale in advance, sometimes stating they have laid a piece of goods aside which they have received permission to hold until a certain hour. This letter appeal is often varied by the clerks calling up their customers on the telephone.

SCHEME 16—INFORMATION FROM ABROAD

A Denver store, catering to the better class of trade, has a letter from its Paris representative mailed to each lady on a

selected list. These letters are sent out just previous to the opening of the spring and fall seasons and give advance information on the styles. Opportunity is of course taken to bring in incidentally that the purchases in Europe have been unusually heavy and that the stock will be most complete.

The people receiving such letters are not likely to go elsewhere—at least until after they have examined the line at the store which goes out of its way to show an interest in them. In the largest city and in the smallest town people prefer to go where they feel at home—where they feel they are especially welcome—and the clear-sighted merchant takes this fact into account and uses the letter to keep in touch with his customers.

SCHEME 17—COOPERATING WITH MANUFACTURER

As manufacturers are advertising and trademarking their goods more and more each year, the retailer must take steps to hold his customers by taking advantage of this advertising by cooperating with the manufacturers whose goods he handles. This is done by sending out letters to his customers furnished by the advertising department of the manufacturers, and also mailing announcements and sales letters on his own initiative, which stamp his store as a place where the nationally advertised goods may be secured. But his letter efforts must not stop here.

In every community persons are constantly answering advertisements. The inquiries are usually referred by the advertiser to the dealer. It is up to him to get after the interested person with a letter which will pull him to the store, for one article purchased of a competitor may lead to the loss of all his business. Consequently, the dealer to whom has been referred an inquiry in regard to a camera, immediately fellows up the inquirer with a personal letter, notifying him that he has a full line of cameras, that he would particularly like to show one of this particular make which he has used continually for the the past seven years, and so on.

There are many angles from which the retailer can work, and while letters may be wasted because they are untimely, poorly written or carelessly handled, the fact remains that a letter which costs him three cents may prove the means of turning an occasional buyer into a steady customer.

How To Extend STORE TRADE Into The *Country*

PART X EXTENDING A STORE'S TRADE BY LETTER CHAPTER 47

THE SMALL *shop-keeper is learning a lesson from the mail-order house and is no longer limited to the local market; he is extending his trade into the neighboring towns—by correspondence. Here are TEN SCHEMES by which successful store-keepers have extended their field of operations by the use of the mails—schemes that have stood the test of trial and which may be applied by any retailer in the city or country who wants to increase his volume of trade by winning customers who are ordinarily beyond his reach*

THE trade of a retailer is not necessarily limited to the business that he does over the counter with his local customers. Shrewd merchants are learning a lesson from the large mail-order houses and are proving adept at the same game; they are extending their trade far into the surrounding country—twenty miles, sometimes as far as 200 miles. Distance seems to lend enchantment to the “bargains” which catalogue houses offer and the convenience of buying by mail wins many an order even when prices are no lower than “in town.”

The most familiar method of winning out of town trade is for merchants to unite at the time of a fair, a carnival, a harvest home or some such special occasion, and conduct sales that will attract buyers from a distance. The next step is when the merchants pool their interests and support a weekly or monthly excursion. Usually such cooperation is hard to maintain and some progressive merchant, tired of trying to keep his compet-

itors lined up, breaks away and boldly advertises that on certain days he will refund the railroad fare when purchases amount to a specified sum.

SCHEME 1—REDEEMABLE RAILROAD CHECKS

This scheme is worked out with extraordinary success by the S. Heyman Company of Oshkosh, Wisconsin. There are several interurbans running out of Oshkosh and once a month the company charts special cars, different days for different lines. Round trip rates as high as forty and fifty cents are cut to ten cents to all who desire to take advantage of the low price. The passenger pays his dime to the conductor and is given a check which may be presented at the Heyman store and exchanged for the return ticket. This necessitates every one's going into the store but it is not necessary to make even a small purchase to secure the return ticket. At all times railroad fare of fifty cents or less is refunded on purchases of five dollars and this offer holds good on these special excursions.

The interurban cars stop in front of the store making it the most convenient place for the visitors to shop, but the advertising department busies itself before these excursions to whet the appetite of the people for the bargains which are offered. The territory along the interurban is literally flooded with circulars describing seasonable goods and making special prices as trade pullers.

The first excursion brought many people who had never before been near the Heyman store. The novelty of the idea appealed to them and the low rate was a pocket-book inducement that filled the excursion cars to the doors. The majority bought goods at the store but the management did not care so much for his first day's sales as in making a good impression upon the visitors; every courtesy was shown them; every accommodation provided and every effort put forth to impress the strangers with the absolute reliability of the establishment.

SCHEME 2—MONTHLY "EXCURSIONS" FROM NEIGHBORING TOWNS

The experiment proved so successful that the monthly excursions are established events. Hundreds of people plan to take these trips regularly and many of them come in between excur-

sions or send by mail for goods. The publicity department keeps up a rapid fire of advertising, sending to everyone on the mailing list bulletins, circulars, special prices and an elaborate store paper that is issued once a month.

The development of a strictly mail-order business was the next step in the extension of trade. The company realized fully that to pull trade through the mails it must first of all inspire confidence, so on all its advertising matter, in its letters acknowledgments, packages—everywhere, the guarantee was emphasized: "No string tied to our guarantee of satisfaction. It means just what it says—satisfaction or money refunded."

And it is continually impressed upon the minds of the clerks and order fillers that this guarantee means just what it says and that the interests of the customers must come first. A merchant appealing to local trade can use whirlwind methods, for prospective customers can see the goods and size up the establishment before they part with their money; but in going after a mail-order business such policies only serve to create suspicion. Steady, persistent advertising and careful attention to requests for samples and in filling orders alone will establish that feeling of confidence which will induce a man to mail in his order and trust to the store to give him square treatment.

SCHEME 3—DISCOUNTS AS REWARDS FOR PROSPECTS' NAMES

These excursion customers gave many names for a mail-order campaign but the company determined to extend its activities beyond the interurban zone. Local newspapers were carefully read and names copied and teachers were asked to send in addresses of possible customers and to compensate them for their trouble, each teacher sending in a list was given a card entitling her to a special discount of ten per cent on all purchases.

With a live list to work from, letters were sent out explaining the store's method of doing business and urging the ladies to send for samples of anything in the dress goods line that they desired. A return postal card was enclosed, for one of the secrets of mail-order success is to make it easy to get samples and prices and easy to place orders. The point is emphasized

that if the samples are not the kind wanted it will be a pleasure to send others.

SCHEME 4—PAYING EXPRESSAGE

Customers and prospects are followed up at regular intervals with catalogues, booklets, circulars and other printed matter explaining the advantages of mail-order buying. The skeptical are given special treatment in the form of testimonials from satisfied customers and everywhere the guarantee is fluttered before them. The company's offer to pay freight or express charges to points within two hundred miles on all purchases of five dollars or over is likewise kept in the foreground.

SCHEME 5—A MONTHLY NEWSPAPER

The Heyman Herald goes out every month to all the names on the mailing list. It is printed in regular newspaper form—a seven-column four-page paper with half the space devoted to display advertising. The paper is much more than a price list or bulletin; it resembles a woman's magazine with articles on fashions, new ideas in neckwear, hosiery and novelties and a department of practical "Household Hints." Regular newspaper headings are used and the paper is made so attractive that it is widely read. The judicious mixture of fashion hints and store news assures a reading that would not be given to any formal advertising matter.

SCHEME 6—MAIL ORDERS FILLED BY "SHOPPERS"

When a mail order is received it is given to a "shopper" who goes through the store and makes purchases for it just the same as if she were buying for herself and these shoppers are under strict orders to look after the interests of the distant customers just as carefully as they can. For the cue has been taken from the older mail-order houses that satisfaction is the only basis on which an out-of-town business can be built.

And so studiously have these policies been carried out that the Heyman company now numbers its mail-order customers by the thousands. There is no advantage to this store in the way of location, transportation facilities and tribu-

tary territory that is not possessed by hundreds of other stores all over the country. There is nothing original or mysterious about its methods but it applies certain principles of merchandising in a way that should prove a blazed trail for others who wish to extend their trade into new territory.

In small communities a merchant knows his customers personally, but as soon as the town grows into a city it is practically impossible for the busy retailer to keep in touch with all his trade and it is much harder to hold the country patrons loyally to a store. Uhler & Phillips of Marion, Ohio, hit upon a scheme that worked out with gratifying results.

SCHEME 7—HOUSE-TO-HOUSE CALLS

A June sale was in preparation and great four-page circulars were issued, advertising its best bargains. A number of the young men employed as salesmen in the store divided the farming country surrounding the city into sections, and with supplies of the sale circulars proceeded to cover the territory by house-to-house calls. They did not stop merely to leave the advertising matter—instead they made it clear in each instance that their trip through the country was conducted for the special purpose of getting into closer touch with their rural patrons, and assure them of the earnest desire of the firm to serve their needs.

Hundreds of farm houses were visited. At each home the salesman endeavored to meet the lady of the house personally, speaking briefly and courteously of the merits of the store and emphasizing the opportunities which the current sale afforded. He also made it a point to obtain the lady's name.

Many of the women called on, flattered and interested by the personal invitation, responded immediately, but in order to get the full benefit of the canvass and again impress the list of prospects with the store's interest in their trade, a novel follow-up was used.

SCHEME 8—PERSONAL LETTERS FROM SALESMEN

A week after the personal solicitations were made, a special letter bearing in the upper left hand corner, under the store name, a half-tone picture of the young man who called at her house, was mailed to every lady. The letter itself was

written in a chatty style, beginning "Dear Madam: When I took the liberty of calling at your home the other day....." and was signed in facsimile by the salesman. It called back to her mind the four-page circular left at her house, asked her to glance over it again and invited her to buy of him personally should she come in. Incidentally it told how successfully the sale was going in the store.

These letters, supplementing the personal calls, made sales. And best of all they made the recipient feel that she could come to the store and trade with a person whom she knew personally even though she had never been inside the store before. A campaign of this kind should prove equally effective in the solicitation of general trade, and an occasional repetition of such trips through the country by clerks would doubtless draw any store into closer touch with the rural population than it could ever attain through the ordinary mediums of publicity.

SCHEME 9—ADVERTISING "BULLETINS"

The Brandies store of Omaha, Nebraska, has demonstrated the possibilities of developing a mail-order business in connection with its retail trade and its experience emphasizes the necessity for going slow; gradually establishing confidence. These stores depend largely upon special circulars, bulletins and samples rather than catalogues. A few items only appear on a bulletin but they are described fully and the price is played up. The guarantee is made prominent by italics, and attention is called to the individual service which all mail-order customers receive; a trained shopper selecting every item.

Prompt, courteous attention to the first order creates a more favorable impression than a bulky catalogue. In fact, a large catalogue has frequently been disastrous to a budding mail-order business. The expense to issue is so great that the patronage does not justify the cost. The catalogue should be a matter of growth, keeping a little ahead of the business but never far in advance.

Personal letters must form the principal medium for developing a mail-order business—carefully written letters that answer every inquiry fully, for the customer is more critical in his first few dealings with a house than he is after it has long been established and enjoys a good reputation. The handling of

complaints calls for special consideration for the good will of the customer must be preserved at any cost.

SCHEME 10—THE MAILING LIST

The nucleus for an out-of-town mailing list can be secured from the transfer desk, the shipping clerk and the alteration department. Local newspapers and county directories will supply names of possible buyers, and satisfied customers are nearly always willing to give the names of friends who might be interested. The list must be kept up to date to prevent wasting ammunition, and every letter and circular should bear this inscription:

POSTMASTER: If this package is not delivered, notify us, and postage will be provided for its return.

When such notices appear on an envelope the postmaster is required to send notice of non-delivery and this enables the store to drop from the list all names that are no longer alive.

With the first letter, call attention to the sample department and enclose a postal card to facilitate the sending for samples. A woman may not know the house but she will trust her judgment on goods that she can see and so free samples are the quickest, surest means of establishing confidence. Illustrations are good but they do not possess half the order-pulling power of samples.

The guarantee cannot be made too strong and the offer to refund money for unsatisfactory goods should appear in every letter and bulletin. Experience has shown that people seldom order merchandise by mail unless they really want it and if the goods are returned it is usually because there is something wrong with them—and the merchant should be thankful for the opportunity of making them right and thereby tightening his hold on the customer instead of losing it altogether.

It is a good policy to prepay all express or freight charges on all purchases over five dollars. Some concerns limit the territory in which they pay transportation, but as a matter of fact over ninety per cent of the orders received will be within a comparatively small radius and the occasional extra freight bill may well be charged up to advertising, for it makes a very effective talking point to advertise that all five dollar purchases are delivered, no matter where the customer lives.

Single sheet circulars should be sent out at intervals of about a month and after four or five of these have been used it is then time to launch the first bargain bulletin, a 17 x 22 sheet printed on both sides. The first page should contain a few striking illustrations, preferably of dresses, suits or cloaks attractively priced. The guarantee and the offer to prepay express charges should be conspicuously printed and possibly a brief statement regarding the policies of the store. The following pages should be filled with bargains; each item fully described and priced. All statements should be conservative for Madam will likely preserve the bulletin and see whether the goods come up to the advance notices and if they do not, no amount of advertising will win her back.

The first bulletin will just about pay for itself but no more—mail-order buying is a matter of education and not over four bulletins should be sent out the first year. By that time they should be pulling well and may be mailed out every month; while circulars should be sent out twice as often. After the trail is so well beaten that it can be easily followed, it is time enough to think of a more ambitious catalogue.

The business is to be had and any retailer can pull trade through the mail. The big mail-order houses in the city have no patent or secret formula for handling this business; the same methods can be applied and are being applied by merchants in smaller cities. The counter can be projected through the mail bag and every class of merchandise from needles and pins to lumber and coal can be sold at retail through the mail.

Letters That Attract *Out-of-Town* CUSTOMERS

PART X EXTENDING A STORE'S TRADE BY LETTER CHAPTER 48

THE rapid development of the great mail-order houses and city department stores attest this fact: the small store-keeper, especially the dealer in the small city and town, is not getting his share of the local trade. Customers naturally trade where they get the best service with the least effort. Here are TWELVE SCHEMES by which small store-keepers have attracted by letters out-of-town customers who had been dealing elsewhere

AMONG farmers and occasional city visitors there is a strong tendency to return to the store where they have previously traded. The stranger hesitates about going to an unknown store. Although he may have traded at a store only once, he feels more at home there than at a place which he has never visited, and so the average customer has "his" or "her" store. And the habit grows on a customer for two reasons: he is not convinced that he can do as well or better somewhere else, and he is not offered special inducements strong enough to pull him into the other stores.

The personal letter is the one available force which will overcome this inertia most easily. The confidential message which enters the customer's own home has far more effect than the general advertisement, and it immediately establishes confidence—a conviction that this store sells satisfaction as well as merchandise. With this feeling established, the good retail letter writer aims to put a real, live inducement into his message, which will draw the prospective customer into his store. And inasmuch as

everyone is looking for that little additional ounce of value or service, the inducement—the scheme behind the letter—is what finally persuades the out-of-town buyer.

SCHEME 1—HITCHING COUPONS IN EXCHANGE FOR TRADE

A Pennsylvania town was losing much of the country business because no adequate accommodations were provided for the farmers' teams or even for the farmers themselves when they came to the city to trade. As a result they were enticed to other towns where good accommodations were afforded. But there was one retailer who realized the importance of the farmers' trade and he took steps to provide the accommodations which were lacking. Consulting the manager of the most centrally located livery in town, the retailer made an agreement to redeem "standing-in coupons," which he would issue to certain farmers on his mailing list. These coupons which entitled the holders to free standing-in privileges for one horse one time at the largest livery in the city were mailed to farmers with a personal letter explaining the use of the coupon. The only stipulation was that the holder should purchase goods to the amount of \$1.00 at this store. The coupon further stated that the store guaranteed satisfaction or money refunded. Each coupon was stamped with a serial number, so that each recipient felt that he was receiving this coupon together with a favored few. In order to make the coupon good at the livery, one of the clerks stamped it to show that the holder of this coupon had purchased the specified amount of goods.

SCHEME 2—FREE LIVERY ACCOMMODATIONS

As a result of this letter campaign many farmers, who had been going to other towns to trade, were induced to return to this city. A retailer, in another city, has varied this scheme by saying in his letters to farmers, "You will have no more trouble about hitching when you come to town. Use the standing-in ticket we are enclosing, absolutely free, with our compliments. Come into our store and get another one to use the next time you are in town. This offer of giving free standing-in tickets is entirely original with us. We realize the trouble farmers have had in the past in this respect and have decided to furnish stand-

ing-in tickets to leading farmers absolutely free. No other store has been so enterprising—no other store has ever been so liberal.”

This retailer further strengthened his scheme by removing from the mind of the prospect any idea that there was a trick behind his offer. He said in his letter, “There are absolutely no strings to this offer. The enclosed ticket entitles you to one standing-in at The Central stable, whether you trade with us or not.” He then went on to say, however, that there was no reason why the recipient should not trade with him, and showed in his letters how it would be to his advantage. By making special agreements with their liverymen, both of these retailers were able to secure rates, so that each redeemed coupon cost less than ten cents. The increased returns in purchases more than justified the small outlay.

SCHEME 3—PARCEL ROOM FOR CUSTOMERS

Another public service scheme which has attracted country business is the notifying of farmers with letters of the fact that the retailer has opened up a parcel checking room, in which the customer may check all her bundles and packages free of charge. This scheme is made more effective and given more of an exclusive feature by enclosing with each letter a card, entitling the recipient to this service free of charge when the ticket is presented.

SCHEME 4—OFFERS OF GIFTS FOR PATRONAGE

In a somewhat similar way a California retailer increased his business among newcomers and persons whom he had never sold. In order to build up a mailing list of possible customers in the territory around his town, he prepared a letter aimed particularly at farmers and ranchers. In this letter he enclosed a coupon, which entitled the holder to a whip, free of charge, if presented at his store within a certain number of days. The whips were of good quality, secured at a low price in large numbers, and a gummed sticker pasted on the handle kept the dealer's name and address before the user.

The offer was given an individual touch by inserting the name of the prospect in ink on each card. The letter, which accom-

panied the coupon, stated plainly that in calling for the free whip the prospect placed himself under no obligation to make any purchase. The retailer pointed out that he simply wished to get acquainted with the recipient and would be pleased to have him call the first time he was in town. This same scheme has proved successful with many different kinds of premiums. It works even more successfully with women than with men. Some retailers, in their letters to farmers, state that with each purchase over a certain amount, a basket would be given away free of charge. With an ordinary stenciling outfit and stencil, the name and address of the customer is sometimes put on each basket. Few farmers and ranchers have enough baskets on the farm, and this appeal has always been effective.

SCHEME 5—TICKETS TO MOTION PICTURE SHOWS

There is no question about the hold moving pictures have on the public—especially on the farmers, for their opportunities for seeing them are naturally limited. A progressive retailer in a Wisconsin city made arrangements with the proprietor of a nickleodeon, near his store, to honor tickets Saturday afternoons and change the pictures every half hour. The merchant then addressed a letter to all the farmers' wives on his mailing list. He figured that the farmer receives a great deal more mail than his wife and a letter to her would be more carefully read—and then it is the women who do most of the trading. His proposition was to give a free ticket to the nickleodeon with every dollar purchase. As values were about the same at the different stores, this proved a strong trade builder, for a half hour with the moving pictures gave the farmer's wife a place to rest and be entertained at the same time; it added a little color to the week's routine. The household necessities in many cases amounted to enough every Saturday to provide tickets for an entire family.

SCHEME 6—STORE DIAGRAMS ON LETTERS

The retailer who understands the farmer trade goes out of his way to make it easy to shop. Large signs, easily read, and plainly marked price tags play an important part in making the farmer feel at home—he likes to find his way about without stopping to make inquiries. Appreciating this an Iowa mer-

chant with a large store occupying two floors and a basement, has a floor plan printed on the back of the letters that he sends out. The location of each department is plainly indicated and lists of every-day necessities are printed along one side and key numbers make it easy to locate them. The practical value of this scheme was shown the first Saturday after sending out letters containing the store diagrams, as many new faces were seen among the regular customers. Both men and women brought in these floor plans, found their way from one department to another and checked off their purchases from the printed list.

SCHEME 7—GIVING AWAY CAR FARE FOR TRADE

An Indiana store planned a big "excursion day special sale." This fact was announced broadly in the newspapers that with the purchase of a certain amount the customer would receive a refund of his car fare. This plan was made especially attractive when the retailer followed up his newspaper campaign with letters "filled in" and addressed to customers on his mailing list. The letter called attention to newspaper announcements of the sale and to a facsimile railroad ticket which was enclosed. The ticket was not good for passage, but it simply served as a graphic reminder of how the recipient of the letter might come to the city and purchase goods without any expense for railroad fare.

SCHEME 8—THE "SPECIAL DISCOUNT" CARD

In planning a big seasonal or special sale, it is usually best, to advertise it extensively in the local newspapers, which circulate among the farmers. But live retailers have learned that the newspaper publicity can be given an individual and personal appeal, which is doubly effective, when introduced by letters. These letters are primarily for the purpose of calling the customer's attention to the announcements of the sale running in the newspapers, and for making each recipient feel that the retailer has written him a personal letter, so that it will be possible for him to take advantage of the bargains which are offered. In order to make this letter really effective it is desirable to add some little inducement not included in the newspaper.

One excellent scheme is a special discount card. In the first letter which the prospect receives, there is enclosed a card which entitles the holder to a discount of five or ten per cent from the regular sale prices quoted in the newspaper advertisement. The recipient is told that this discount to her is one that is sent to only a favored few. Her name is written in ink and the card is stamped with a serial number.

This first letter is followed up within a week by another calling the recipient's attention to the card and the fact that the limit on the offer is about to expire. Occasionally, a third letter is written to the persons whose cards have not been redeemed at the store, stating that the retailer has decided to extend the limit for a few days longer. In this letter another discount card is enclosed and marked, "Special Duplicate."

SCHEME 9—SPECIALIZING ON STAPLE GOODS

Observe how a Michigan dealer talks to his prospective customers about his flour, when he opens a letter as follows: "If it were possible for me to do so, I would like to call on you and your neighbors, just for the purpose of telling you about our *Excello* flour. You can use in time a sack or two of good flour—it is staple—it is a necessity—so even if you are not ready to buy any flour just now—why not anticipate your wants and take advantage of the low prices I am quoting you today—and come in the next time you are in town." Enclosed in this letter was a return post card, on the back of which the recipient of the letter could fill in the amount of the flour she desired at the price quoted her in the letter. Then the merchant would hold the flour for her until the next time she came into the city.

SCHEME 10—CUSTOMERS' LISTS FROM BANK CASHIERS

In Birmingham, Alabama, a furnishing company has built up a business among out-of-town patrons which nearly equals that of the patronage of the customers in Birmingham. This is a quality shop, selling a high grade men's furnishing goods. In every community a shop of this kind must necessarily appeal to a limited number of persons who appreciate and are willing to pay for quality goods. The town of Birmingham, in itself, did not offer enough business for this retailer. Consequently

he decided on a mail campaign for business among out-of-town buyers.

Personal letters were written on high grade embossed letterheads to the cashiers of banks in the smaller towns surround-

Dear Sir:-

We desire to obtain the names of the men and young men of your city whom you think would be apt to patronize an establishment where the better grades of men's wearables are featured, and as you are doubtless in a position to best give us this information we write to ask if you will be kind enough to furnish us with such a list of names.

There are, of course, in all cities a few who would not be considered responsible or, at least, prompt pay in the event a charge account should be opened with them and in the list you furnish us will ask that you designate those whom you believe to be responsible and deserving of a credit accommodation. We will treat the matter in strict confidence and highly appreciate this service which, we assure you, will not go by default.

We conduct a high class clothing, hat and furnishing establishment and realize the difficulty one often has of obtaining this character of wearables in their home city and it is for the purpose of getting in close touch with the better element of men in your community that we ask for this list of names.

Assuring you again of our appreciation and a desire to reciprocate the favor, we are,

Sincerely yours,

STANFORD COMPANY.

This letter was sent out by a quality clothing shop in Birmingham to cashiers of banks in smaller towns, asking for the names of men who might be interested in buying a better line of clothing and furnishings than is carried in a small store. These letters secured a valuable mailing list for the store

ing Birmingham. In these letters the retailer frankly told the cashier that he wished to obtain the names of the men in the banker's town who would be apt to patronize an establishment where the better class of men's clothing was featured. In this letter the retailer pointed out the fact that his clothing shop carried clothing and men's wearables which the retailer in smaller

cities could not afford to keep, because the call for them was so limited. The banker, in almost every instance, realized that there were a few men in his town who did buy in Birmingham and other southern cities certain articles of clothing that could not be secured in the local stores. Consequently, he was willing to send these names to the retailer, after he was assured that they would be held in the strictest confidence.

The retailer received replies from all but six of the cashiers, and each gave him a splendid list of names. The advantage of securing these names from the cashiers was that in almost every instance only those persons were selected to whom a credit account could be safely given.

As an expression of the retailer's appreciation, he sent each of the cashiers giving him a list of names a cravat of excellent quality, stating in his letter that he hoped the cashier would accept it in the spirit in which it was given, and invited him to visit the store at the first opportunity and make himself known. This second letter to cashiers alone well repaid the trouble and expense incurred, as they were generally appreciative of the unexpected gift, and the result was to make friends for the store of at least one influential and reliable citizen in every town within a reasonable trading distance.

The names furnished by the cashiers of the various banks were filed on 3 x 5 cards, which have spaces for the name, address, size of coat, trousers, hat, shirt, collar and hose, with lines at the bottom for filling in the amounts which might be purchased from month to month. One space was reserved also for the person recommending the name. Persons who opened charge accounts and also those who bought for cash have had the amounts entered under the month in which the purchase was made.

When this list of names was finally made up, a carefully prepared personal letter was mailed to each person, telling him that he had been suggested as a person who would be interested in the retailer's clothes and who would want to visit the quality shop the next time he was in Birmingham. These letters are systematically followed up by means of booklets and other letters. The result of this little campaign has been to place the retailer in close touch with the most desirable element of the many small towns within his natural trade zone, and it has made many valued customers, who not only visit and buy in

the shop when in the city, but who make use of the mails for ordering articles of apparel which are sent subject to approval.

In some instances where the amounts are so large that the necessity for further credit information concerning an individual's responsibility is evident, the friendly cashier, who has previously

Dear Sir:-

Your name has been suggested to us as one who would likely be interested in men's wearables of the better class and we take this method of extending an invitation for you to pay our shop a visit when in the city.

We recognize, and appreciate the fact, that a person prefers to lend support to home establishments but is often unable to procure from them all the articles of clothing and hats and furnishings of the quality he would like to wear and it is this part of your patronage we wish to solicit.

You will find our wearables to be not only correct as to style, but to possess a degree of quality and character far above the commonplace and in which you can place absolute reliance.

Trusting to be favored with a visit from you on your next trip to Birmingham and assuring you of our high appreciation for your patronage, we are,

Respectfully,

STANFORD COMPANY.

This letter was used to bring the shop to the attention of the possible customers. It was carefully worded to make the recipients feel that they were not disloyal to their local merchants by making purchases in the larger city.

recommended the name, is only too glad to furnish the dealer with a report on which a reliable decision may be based.

SCHEME 11—A BANK CHECK ENCLOSURE

The best advertising scheme ever used by a concern in Atlanta was based on a letter in which it said that the recipient's time was valuable, and that the firm was willing to pay him for it, at the rate of ten dollars a day. "We want just two minutes of your time," the letter read. "and although this letter

is well worth your time, we are willing to pay you for the two minutes, for which we enclose our check for five cents."

The letter went on to call attention to the store's new stock of goods. Many persons laughingly brought in their checks to be cashed. Some sent them through their bank. The scheme proved to be a tremendous success and brought more new business than any other plan ever devised by these retailers.

The proprietor of the retail store, selling the more staple articles, often feels that he cannot adopt many of the sales schemes used by his neighbors. He thinks it impractical to use letters in his solicitations. An Iowa grocer, however, has built up a big business among the farmer trade by appealing to them along the line of pure groceries. He has won their confidence by sending them letters opening in such a way as, "Why not serve *pure* groceries on your table in the future—when they cost no more? At least give our grocery department a trial. Come in to see us the first time you are in town."

SCHEME 12—A "FREE" \$5.00 CERTIFICATE

An Ohio store used a special certificate scheme with most satisfactory results. The certificate in itself is the basis of a campaign. Under this scheme the retailer advises that with every \$20.00 purchase, the customer will receive a certificate, which will entitle him to \$5.00 worth of merchandise absolutely free. This proposition proved exceedingly attractive to prospective customers. The merchant, at the time of the sale, can easily afford to make an offer of this kind, for \$5.00 worth of merchandise, priced at retail, does not mean that these goods cost him \$5.00. This scheme is backed up and given impetus by means of letters mailed to customers and prospective customers. In each letter the proposition is plainly described. A copy of one of the certificates is sent, marked in red ink across its face with the word "sample."

Another plan which never fails to appeal to out-of-town trade is the offer to pay car fare if the purchases exceed a certain amount. Some stores offer to give away an elegant dinner set with purchases above a stated amount. These dinner sets, in English or American porcelain, may be secured at very low prices—so low that on purchases amounting to \$50.00 or \$75.00 an entire 100-piece dinner set may often be given away.

